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MANUEL M. JINBASHIAN

**CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS
IN ARMENIA
DURING THE ARAB DOMINATION**

**From the First Invasion to the Time
of the Early ʿAbbāsids**



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CONTENTS

	page
NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS	9
FORWARD	11
INTRODUCTION	13
A – Geography	15
B – Socio-Political Structure	16
C – The Church in her Feudal Background	21
D – Church-State Relations to the End of the Sixth Century	27
E – Review of the Sources and Literature	31
1 – Armenian Sources	32
2 – Arabic Sources	37
3 – Byzantine and Syriac Sources	40
4 – The Literature	40

Chapter I

THE PERIOD OF CONQUEST AND THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

A – Byzantino-Armenian relations to A.D.650	43
1 – Byzantine Religious Policy	43
2 – Byzantine Administrative, Fiscal and Military Policies	47
B – The Early Invasions	52
1 – The First Arab Invasion	52
2 – The Second Arab Invasion	54
C – Period of Co-operation between the Catholicos and the <i>Sparapet</i>	58
D – Armenia Submits to Arab Rule	70
E – The Occupation by Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah	80
F – The Evolution of Arab Ecclesiastical Policy during the Conquest	85
G – Conclusion	89

Chapter II

AUTONOMOUS ARMENIA AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

A – The Rule of Grigor Mamikonean	93
1 – Close Personal Relations between the Catholicos and Grigor	94
2 – Dawit' Dvnec'i – Surhan	95

3 – Building Activity	96
4 – Grigor Mamikonean and the Relics of St. Gregory	98
5 – The Mission of Bishop Israyēl to the Huns	100
B – Political Developments and their effect on Church-State Relations	103
1 – The Death of Grigor Mamikonean	103
2 – Independent Armenia between the Caliphate and the Byzantine Empire	105
C – Byzantium in Control of Armenia	107
D – Byzantine Religious Policy – Victory of Chalcedonianism	110
E – Church Union under Emperor Justinian II and Catholicos Sahak III	111
F – Note on the Penetration of Chalcedonianism in the Armenian Church	114
G – Conclusion	117

Chapter III

CALIPH ^cABDAL-MALIK AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

A – The Policy of Arabization in Armenia	124
B – Abū Shaykh Ibn ^c Abdallah and his Policy in Armenia	128
C – The Consequences of the New Arab Policy	131
D – Catholicos Sahak: the Statesman	135
E – Conclusion	139

Chapter IV

CATHOLICOS ELIA AND HIS PRO-ARAB POLICY

A – The Election of Catholicos Elia	143
B – Catholicos Elia and the Chalcedonian Movement in Albania	144
C – The Synod of Partaw	150
D – The Burning of the <i>Naxarars</i>	152
E – Captives in Damascus and Exiles in Poti	156
F – Conclusion	160

Chapter V

CATHOLICOS YOVHANNĒS III OJNEC’I AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

A – The Policy of ^c Umar II	163
B – Yovhannēs III and his Encounter with ^c Umar II	164
C – Yovhannēs III’s Activities after his Return	170
D – Yovhannēs III: the Statesman	175
1 – The Book of Armenian Canon-law	178
2 – The Council of Manazkert	179
E – Conclusion	184

Chapter VI

THE FALL OF THE Umayyads and the ʿAbbāsīd Revolution

A – Catholicos Dawit' I Aramonec'i	188
B – Arabo-Khazar Wars and the Resulting Change in Policy	191
C – The Martyrdom of Vahan Goł'tnac'i	194
D – The ʿAbbāsīd Revolution	198
E – Conclusion	202

Chapter VII

THE EARLY ʿAbbāsīds and Church-State Relations

I – The First two Caliphs and Church-State Relations	203
A – The Caliphate of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Saffāḥ	203
B – The Caliphate of Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr	206
C – Direct Intervention in the Affairs of the Church	208
D – Council of Partaw	210
E – Rebellion in Armenia	213
II – Direct Arab Rule and the Church	215
A – The Martyrdom of Hamazasp and Sahak Arcruni	217
B – Ibndokē and his Excesses	219
C – The Second Governorship of Khuzaymah	222
D – Church-State Relations until the Rise of the Bagratids	224
E – Conclusion	227
CONCLUSION	229
BIBLIOGRAPHY	233

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

The transliteration system followed in this dissertation for the Armenian is that of *Revue des Études Arméniennes*, and for the Arabic that of the new edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* with some modifications: the letters *dj* and *ḵ* are written throughout as 'j' and 'q' and the letters *th*, *kh*, *dh*, *sh* and *gh* are written without the underlining.

Abbreviations

A	Ararat (Ējmiacin)
AB	Analecta Bollandiana
AGWG	Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gessellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philol.-Hist. Klasse Neue Folge
AKM	Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
AO	Acta Orientalia (Budapest)
AQ	Armenian Quarterly
Ar	Arabica
B	Byzantion
Baz	Bazmavēp
BGA	Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum
BL	Book of Letters <i>Girk' T'lt'oc'</i>
BM	Banber Matenadarani
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London)
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CHA	Collection d'historiens arméniens
CHAMA	Collection des historiens anciens et modernes de l'Arménie
CMH	Cambridge Medieval History
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DHA	Deux historiens arméniens
DI	Der Islam
EHR	English Historical Review
EI ¹	The Encyclopaedia of Islam
EI ²	The Encyclopaedia of Islam, new edition
EO	Échos d'Orient
HA	Handēs Amsoreay
HE	Histoire de l'Église, ed. A. Fliche and V. Martin
HKA	Handbuch der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaften.
JA	Journal Asiatique

JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
LCL	The Loeb Classical Library
M	Le Muséon
Ma	al-Machriq
MAISP	Mémoires de l'Académie Imperiale des Sciences de St. Pétersbourg
MB	Mélanges Bidez (Université libre de Bruxelles)
MUSJ	Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph (Beyrouth)
MZ	Manr Žamanakagrut'yunner
NBHL	Nor Bargirk Haykazea Lezui
NGWG	Nachrichten von der Königliche Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philol.– Hist. Klasse
P–BH	Patma – Banasirakan Handes
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
REA	Revue des études arméniennes
REAnc	Revue des études anciennes
ROC	Revue de l'Orient Chrétien
SH	Sop 'erk' Haykakank'
SI	Studia Islamica
SJB	Société Jean Bodin (Université libre de Bruxelles)
T	Traditio
Teġ	Haykakan SSR Gitut'yunneri Akademiayi Telekagir
TS	Theological Studies
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
V	Vostan
ZAPh	Zeitschrift für armenische Philologie
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

FORWARD

The Critical assessment of the Armenian sources and the re-establishment of older ones – such as the *Diegesis*, *The History of Catholicos Arsen of Georgia*, and the document known as *The Letter of Patriarch Photius* – have brought to light historical evidence which show the important role the Armenian Church played in the political life and administration of Armenia under Arab rule. No study, up till now, has been dedicated to the study of the question of Church-State Relations in Armenia under the Arab Domination. It begins with the first Arab invasion of Armenia in AD 640, leading up to the middle of the 8th century – the beginning of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Among the problems discussed are the role the National Church played in the administration of the land; the position and authority of the head of the Armenian Church – the Catholicos – *vis-à-vis* the Arab governor, the indigenous Prince of Armenia and the local feudal lords; the religious policy of the Caliphate in Armenia and the attitude of the Arab settlers towards the Armenian Church and population; finally, the relations of the Armenian Church with her neighbouring Churches – the Byzantine Chalcedonian and the Syriac Jacobite Churches – and the influence of these relationships on Church-State Relations within Armenia.

Under the Umayyad Caliphate Armenia enjoyed a great degree of internal autonomy and religious freedom, as a result of which a great number of churches and monasteries were built up to the end of the 7th century. But by the turn of the century Arab control of Armenia was stronger. A new policy of Arabization was introduced. For the first time Arab governors were appointed under Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan and his brother Muhammad. This policy took two forms: firstly, there were attempts at destroying the *Naxarar* feudal structure of Armenia; and secondly, to isolate the Armenian Church from the Byzantine Church. There were Catholicoi who pursued pro-Arab policies to defend the rights and position of the National Church. One must say that there was a marked difference between the attitude of the Umayyad Caliphate and the Abbasid Caliphate towards the Armenian Church.

I would like to underline the fact that the Arab Caliphate – viz., the Umayyads were tolerant and well disposed towards the Armenian people and the Armenian Church. One can see a reflection of this in the great welcome the Arabs accorded to the remnants of the Armenian people after the Turkish genocide during the First World War (1914-1918). The Arab people have been very tolerant and have shown their brotherly sentiment towards the Armenians. It is with gratitude and deep appreciation of the Arab people and their hospitality that I write these lines, a testimony to the deep rooted friendship between the Arab and Armenian people.

I would like to thank the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation: the head of the Armenian Communities Department, Dr. Mikhael Essayan, who is on the forefront of the defence of Armenian culture and learning in the diaspora and in Armenia proper.

I want to thank in particular Dr. Zaven Yegavian, the Director of the Armenian Communities Department, a great scholar in his own right and the editor of the series **The Armenian Library of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation**, for including this volume in the series dedicated to the 1700th anniversary of the establishment of Christianity as the state religion in Armenia.

I would like to thank the German Bible Society who has kindly provided the three maps placed at the end of the work.

Finally, I would like to thank and dedicate this work to my wife, Hasmig, who has stood by me and encouraged me at all times. She has spent months in typing the manuscript of the present work.

Manuel M. Jinbachian (Rev. Dr.)
Strasbourg, 29 October 2000

INTRODUCTION

Although the historical evidence at our disposal makes us realize the important role the Church played in the politics and administration of Armenia during the period of Arab domination, yet no study has been made on the question of Church-State relations in Armenia under the Caliphate. The present work, therefore, aims at elucidating the problem of Church-State relations in Armenia during the Arab domination, beginning with the first invasion, in A. D. 640, and continuing up to the end of the eighth century. The existing studies by modern historians on the period deal mainly with the political, economic and military affairs and ignore the Church almost completely. On the other hand, practically all the Church histories on the post-Arsacid and Arab periods stand in need of revision for two fundamental reasons: firstly, the inadequate assessment of the Armenian sources, which until recently were evaluated in an unsatisfactory manner; secondly, the re-establishment of some old disregarded sources – such as the *Diegesis*, the History of Catholicos Arsēn of Georgia and the document known as the Letter of Patriarch Photius to the Armenian Catholicos Zacharia – which has brought to light the fact that Armenian national historians have overlooked or perhaps intentionally suppressed certain historical facts with an ulterior objective – to sing the praises of their patron dynasties or advance the cause of the National Church.

We are interested in discovering what role the Church, as a feudal institution, played in the administration of the land. What was the position of the Catholicos *vis-à-vis* the Arab governor *ostikan*,¹ the prince of Armenia *išxan*

¹ On the meaning and etymology of the word *ostikan* see *Nor Bagirk' Haykazeen Lezui*, ed. G. Awetik'ean, *et. al.* (Venice, 1837, vol. II, p. 523; H. Ačarjan, *Hayerēn Armatakan Banaran* (Erevan, 1926-1935), vol. V, pp. 541 sqq.; H. Hübschmann, *Armenische Grammatik*, I. *Armenische Etymologie* (Leipzig, 1895) (reprinted Hildesheim, 1962), pp. 215 sq. On the position of the *ostikan* before the Arab domination see C. Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Georgetown, 1963), pp. 168, 176 sq., 178 n. 119, 179 n. 121, 394 n. 17; N. Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*, trans. N. G. Garsoïan (Lisbon, 1970), pp. 35, 391 n. 25. For the list of Arab *ostikans* see M. Ghazarian, *Armenien unter der arabischen Herrschaft*

*Hayoc*² and the feudal lords *naxarark*³? What was the religious policy of the Caliphate in Armenia – was it consistent or did it vary under the Umayyads and the ^cAbbāsids? Were the clergy and the church property taxed? What was the attitude of the Arab colonizers to the Church? We shall also touch on theological controversies, heretical movements and the relation of the Armenian Church with neighbouring Churches in so far as these have any bearing upon Church-State relations within Armenia.

The geography, socio-political structure and historical background of Armenia have conditioned the historical development of the Church. To be able to study the problem in its true historical perspective, during the aforesaid period, we must first define the character of the Armenian society before the Arab period and find out its influence on the Church. Second, we must find out how the political and military vicissitudes of the land have left their indelible mark on the evolution of the Armenian Church. Sometimes the physical features of a country tend to encourage the development of a number of autonomous principalities instead of a unified and strong central government: this was the situation in, for example, Greece and Armenia.⁴ Historically there was no political and, to a certain extent, even no cultural unity in Armenia. The only binding ties were linguistic and ethnic; consequently, it had a fragmented feudal polity and the Church born in such a feudal polity inevitably reflected its character – i.e., was feudal and disunited.

(Marburg, 1903), pp. 38-43; J. Laurent, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam* (Paris, 1919), pp. 336-347.

² Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 114 n. 184, 153 uses the title 'Presiding Prince'. It was an office that combined the functions of both commander in chief of the armed forces and imperial viceroy or Persian *marzpan*. For a study on the Princes of Armenia under the Arabs see A. Ter-Ghévondian, "Le 'Prince d'Arménie' à l'époque de la domination Arabe", REA, N. S. vol. III (1966), pp. 185-200; Laurent, *Arménie*, pp. 76, 332-336. On *išxan* and its etymology see Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. III, pp. 94-97; E. Benveniste, "Titres iraniens en arménien", REA, vol. IX (1929), pp. 7 sqq. Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 114 n. 184, says it is related to the Sogdian *axšavan*/*xšēvan* and the old Persian *xšāyaθiya*, meaning king.

³ The exact etymology of the word is not clear; it probably comes from *nahadar* or *nafadar* in old Persian, meaning the chief of the family. L- . Inčičean's view that it means *praefectus*, in *Hnaxosut'iwn Ašxarhagrakan Hayastaneayc' Ašxarhi* (Venice, 1835) vol. II, p. 77, must be rejected. See Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. V, pp. 18-21; A. Meillet, "De quelques mots Parthes en arménien", REA, vol. II (1922), p. 2; Benveniste, *ibid*, pp. 5 sqq.; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, pp. 514 sq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 115 sq. n. 188; H. Manandyan, *Feodalismō Hin Hayastanum* (Erevan, 1934), pp. 32 sq.; R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie* (Paris, 1947), pp. 287 sq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 342 sq., 514, n. 44; *idem*, "L'aspect iranien du servage", SJB (Bruxelles, 1937), p. 142.

⁴ Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 7; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 37.

Armenia, like the other Caucasian lands, was surrounded by mighty neighbours. She was subject to both their aggression and their influence. The continuous rivalry between Rome and Persia ultimately brought about the partition of the country towards the end of the fourth century, and the subsequent abolition of the two Armenian Kingdoms. This division remained in force till the end of the sixth century when the central provinces passed to the Byzantine side.⁵ Each dominating power tried to shape the political, economic and religious affairs in their respective sectors in a favourable manner for their interests, thus creating a religious and cultural dichotomy which hampered the natural development of the Church. Even long after the disappearance of Sassanian Persia and the loosening of the political hold of Byzantium over Armenia, the religious dichotomy continued, creating enormous problems in Church-State relations during the Arab domination.

A – Geography

Historic Armenia contained some of the highest and most rugged mountain ranges in western Asia. These highlands extended from the Caspian sea and Ādhārbayjān in the east to Cappadocia and the Euphrates basin in the west, and from the Pontic mountains and the Kur river in the north to the Taurus mountains and the plains of northern Mesopotamia in the south. It was divided into two major districts, Greater Armenia and Minor Armenia.⁶ The former extended from the confluent of the Kur and Araxes rivers in the east to the Euphrates valley in the west, and from the Kur basin in the north to the Tigris valley in the south – touching lake Urmia in the south east and north east Syria (“al-Jazīrah”) in the south west. Minor Armenia is the land to the west of the Euphrates river which had long fallen outside the gale of Armenian political and cultural tradition.⁷

⁵ On the partition of A. D. 387 see *infra* pp. 65 sq. n. 17.

⁶ Mec Hayk’ and P’ok’r Hayk’: the μεγάλη Ἀρμενία = Armenia Maior and μικρά Ἀρμενία = Armenia Minor of the Greco-Roman sources.

⁷ Minor Armenia was the first part of Armenia to be annexed by Rome in A. D. 72 and was turned into a part of Cappadocia. It was a separate province under Diocletian and subsequently divided into two under Theodosius I: First Armenia with its centre at Sebastia and Second Armenia with Melitene as capital. In A. D. 536 Emperor Justinian renamed them Second and Third Armenia respectively and then Emperor Maurice renamed Third Armenia as First Armenia. Finally, Emperor Heraclius transformed the whole region with the addition of some neighbouring districts into the Armeniac Theme. See M. L. Chaumont, *Recherches sur l’histoire d’Arménie* (Paris, 1969), pp. 167-171; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 55-74; Manandyan, *K’nnakan Tesut’yun Hay Zolovrdi Patmut’yan* (Erevan, 1960), vol. II, pt. ii, p. 125 sqq.; T’ X. Hakobyan, *Hayastani Patmakan Ašxarhagrut’yun* (Erevan, 1968), pp. 105-111.

Greater Armenia was divided into fifteen provinces *ašxarhk*⁸ or *nahangk*', each of which was in turn divided into a number of cantons *gawark*'.⁹

Besides the feudal provincial division there was a more profound division along the ancient political, cultural and religious lines. There was a kind of geographic dichotomy whereby the eastern and southern regions – being closer to Persia and Syria – were under Sassanian cultural and Syrian Christian influence, while the northern and western cantons were under the influence of Byzantium and the Imperial Church. Consequently princes and ecclesiastical dignitaries coming from these regions had conflicting outlooks and political sympathies.

B – Socio-Political Structure

It would be an arduous task to try to give the picture of the social stratification of Armenia during the Arsacid and post-Arsacid periods in a short space; many scholars have dedicated volumes to the study of the subject.¹⁰ We shall only touch those aspects that have influenced the Church and thus conditioned the evolution of Church-State relations. Arsacid Armenian society was divided into two main classes: the nobility and the *Tiers-État*. Each of these classes were in turn divided into substrata with the clergy, as in Sassanian Persia, belonging to the noble class.¹¹

At the top of the social rung stood the big land-owning princely, dynasties with the King of Great Armenia presiding over them. The Catholicos, himself a prince and a big land-owner, belonged to this class. In the Armenian sources the members of this highest ruling class were called *naxarark*', and their sover-

⁸ On the meaning and etymology of *ašxarh* see Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. I, pp. 396 sqq.; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 101; coming from old Persian *xšaθra* meaning kingdom, principality.

⁹ S. Tēr Movsēsean, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc*' (Venice, 1922), p. 359, says there were 170 cantons in Great Armenia; M. K'ajuni, *Ašxarhagrut'iwn Hin ew Nor Hayastaneayc*' (Venice, 1857), p. 44, says 190; H. Hübschmann, *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen* (Strasburg, 1904), p. 366, says there were 192 cantons; Leo, *Erkeri Žołovac* (Erevan, 1966), vol. I, pp. 148-166, says there were 189 cantons. Hübschmann seems to be right.

¹⁰ Adontz, *Armenia, passim*; Toumanoff, *Studies, passim*; Manandyan, *Feodalism, passim*; Inčičean, *Hnaxosut'iwn*, vol. II, pp. 65-234; R. Kherumian, "Esquisse d'une fédération oubliée", V, vol. I (1948-1949), pp. 7-56; Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 287-295; S. E. Hakobyan, *Hay Gyul ac'iut'yan Patmut'yun* (Erevan, 1957, 1964), 2 vols., *passim*.

¹¹ A. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, 2^{ème} éd. (Copenhagen, 1944), pp. 116-122; *infra*, pp. 11 sqq., 21 sqq.

eighty and their provinces *naxararut'iwnk'*.¹² One of the basic characteristics of the *naxarar* system was that these *naxarars* were fully sovereign rulers in their own principalities, having legislative, executive and judicial independence. They had their own feudal militia,¹³ flags,¹⁴ fortresses¹⁵ and capitals called *Gah* or *Gahoyk*.¹⁶ The fact that they had full political autonomy in their principalities can be seen from the title they bore, *Iṣṣan* (prince, sovereign, despot). This characteristic is called by both Adontz and Toumanoff the dynastic aspect of the *naxarar* system.¹⁷

The second characteristic of the *naxarar* system was the fact that these lords, being sovereign princes in their own provinces, were at the same time subordinate to the Arsacid king of Great Armenia, who was also the lord of the royal province of Ayrarat, called *Ostan* in the sources.¹⁸ The Arsacids were

¹² For the etymology see *supra*, pp. 2 sq., n. 3; the suffix *ut'iwn* forms the abstract form of the noun, and *K'* is the sign of plural. At the top of the class of nobles were the four *vitaxa* (*bdeaṣṣ*), the princes of the four marches; see Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 123 sq., 131 sq., 154-192. On the etymology, *ibid*, pp. 155 sq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 175, 178. On their military power, Adontz, *ibid*, pp. 193 sqq., 222-225, 321; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 34-38; J. Marquart, *Ērānšahr*, nach der Geographie des ps. Moses Xorenac'i (Berlin, 1901), pp. 165 sqq., 171 sqq., 178 sq.; cf. Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 22 sq., 101 sq., 137 n. 1. The *naxarars* in turn were divided into senior (*awag*) and junior (*krtser*) *naxararut'iwnk'* according to their cushion and ancestry which in turn depended on the extent of their domain and the number of cavalry they could muster, see Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 43 sq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 241-252; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 344 sq. Below the *naxarars* were the cadets of the princely dynasties and the royal house who were called *Sepuhk'*, see Adontz, "Aspect", p. 142; *idem*, *Armenia*, pp. 311 sq. (on p. 342 he says it was used exclusively for the sons of the princely families; cf. pp. 357-361, 486 sq., n. 26, 521 sq. nn. 76-78). Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 124 sqq. n. 215; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 50 sqq., dispute Adontz's view.

¹³ The military potential of the *naxarars* is pictured in the *Zoranamak* (military list). Y. Šahxat'uncan, *Storagrut'iwn Kat'ulike Ējmiacni ew Hing Gawarac'n Araratay* (Ējmiacin, 1842), vol. II, pp. 58 sq.; L. Ališan, *Ayrarat* (Venice, 1890), pp. 420-430 (esp. 424); Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 193 sqq., 198, 206-209, 218, 220 sq., 223 sqq., 227, 232 sqq., 445 n. 32, 68*-69*; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 135, 229-241; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 54 sq.

¹⁴ P'awstos Buzand, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* (Venice, 1832), Bk. iv, ch. 3, p. 67; *Patmut'iwn Sebēosi episkoposi i Herakln*, ed. K'. Patkanean (St. Petersburg, 1879), p. 36.

¹⁵ P'awstos, Bk. iii, ch. 18, p. 47; Łazar P'arpec'i, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* (Venice, 1933), ch. 67, pp. 389 sqq.

¹⁶ P'awstos, Bk. iii, ch. 4, p. 10; the seat of the Manawazeian dynasty is called *bun gahoyic' giwln*. Adontz and Toumanoff identify it with *Ostan*; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 241, 250, 351 sq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 114; cf. Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 56 sqq. For the etymology of *Ostan*, see Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 215; *idem*, *Ortsnamen*, p. 460; Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. V, pp. 538-541.

¹⁷ Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 303-371; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 34-144.

¹⁸ P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 19, p. 129; Bk. v, ch. 18, p. 212; *supra*, n. 16. It was later that *Ostan* came to mean also the centres of other *naxararut'iwnk'*, cf. Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 57 sq.

given the title *t'agawor* (king) or *ark'ay* (sovereign, potentate) and their position was known as "The lordship of the kingdom of the land of Armenia".¹⁹ The *naxarars*, being subordinate, were called *carayk'* (servants) of the king and their responsibilities towards the king were called *carayut'iwn* (service). Adontz has pointed out that the terms servant and service correspond to the *servitium* or *obsequium* of western feudalism.²⁰ The different responsibilities that the *naxarars* had was known as *gorc* (work, agency, office), the one having such a responsibility was called *gorcakal* (officer, agent, commissioner) and his office *gorcakalut'iwn* (agency, office) or 'Ministerium'.²¹

Among the important offices reported in the sources we come across the "Office of Great Justice" (*gorcakalut'iwn meci dataworut'ean*), which was the hereditary *ministerium* of the catholicosial house of Gregory the Illuminator. Speaking about the authority of bishop Daniël of Tarawn, P'awstos says:

But at that time was still alive the holy and great old chorepiscopus Daniël, a miraculous man. He had been a disciple of the Great Gregory [the Illuminator], [he was appointed] overseer and superior of the churches of Tarawn province, which was the hereditary ministerium²² [*jeŭakan iŭxanut'iwn*] of Gregory and the Office of Great Justice *gorcakalut'eann meci dataworut'eann* of that region...²³

Before the conversion of Armenia to Christianity, as in Sassanian Iran, the administration of justice was in the hands of the pagan clergy; and after Christianization this office, along with the lands and wealth of the pagan temples, passed to the Christian clergy.²⁴

The fact that judicial authority lay in the hands of the clergy is further confirmed by two fifth-century historians. After the abolition of the Armenian

¹⁹ P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 2, p. 66. The position of the king of Armenia, however, was not strong *vis-à-vis* the *naxarars*. Some of the feudal lords were more powerful than the king – e.g., Manuël Mamikonean defeated king Varazdat in A. D. 377/8 and became regent until his death. Manuël regarded himself not as the vassal (*camy*) of the king but his equal (*ḏnker*-companion, partner), or even his superior. *Ibid*, Bk. v, ch. 37, pp. 139 sqq.

²⁰ Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 349; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 117; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 45, 60 sq. In the Armenian sources the word *camy* (servant) is used to describe this relation; P'awstos, Bk. iii, ch. 9, p. 21; *carayut'iwn*, *ibid*, Bk. v, ch. 38, p. 245; Łazar, ch. 25, p. 140, ch. 2, p. 168, ch. 45, p. 263.

²¹ Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 185 sqq., 354, 440 n. 2.

²² On *jeŭakan iŭxanut'iwnn* and its meaning see Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 7 sqq., he equates it with *gorcakalut'iwn*, an office or ministerium.

²³ P'awstos, Bk. iii, ch. 14, p. 36.

²⁴ Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 116-122, 299-313.

Kingdom, the Sassanian King Bahrām Gur or Varhran V (421-439) appointed a Syrian clergyman to the supreme spiritual Office of Armenia:

Consequently Vram acquiesced and fulfilled the request of both parties: he appointed to the archiepiscopal throne *episkoposapetut'iwn*²⁵ another Syrian called Šmuēl, in order that he should be opposed to the great Sahak (Isaac) and be an *anticatholicos*; and offered him the Office of assisting the *marzpan*,²⁶ to oversee the distribution of the tribute to be collected, the Law courts and other secular affairs.²⁷

Similarly, Yazdkart II (439-457) appointed a *mogpet*²⁸ (a chief magian) as "Judge of the land, to the end that they [i.e., the Persians] might tarnish the glory of the Church."²⁹ But since the "Office of Great Justice" was a *ministerium* there were cases that fell under the legal jurisdiction of the King, the feudal lord of each province or their representatives.³⁰ Often the interests of the secular princes clashed with those of the Church: monarchy was in conflict with theocracy.

After the dissolution of the monarchy, the judicial prerogatives of the Church increased considerably. The higher clergy evolved into the defenders of justice and morality, and eventually came to control the civil and criminal justice

²⁵ It is not very clear exactly when the chief bishops of Armenia started to bear the title of *kat'olikos*. According to G. Garitte, *La Narratio De Rebus Armeniae*, in CSCO (Louvain, 1952), vol. 132, subs. 4, pp. 56 sq., it was after the middle of the 5th c. See also Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 283, 285 sq., 475 nn. 75-76; L. S. Kogean, *Hayoc' Ekelec'in* (Beirut, 1961), pp. 109-112; K. Amatuni, "Hay Kat'olikosakan At'orin Ink'navarut'iwn", *Baz* (1968), pp. 181 sqq. The title was certainly used in the sources of the fifth century; the question is whether the title carried the same authority as it did after the second half of the fifth century.

²⁶ On *Marzpan* see Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 94, 172 sq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 197, 476 n. 169; Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 136 sq., 519. On the etymology, see Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. IV, p. 913 sq.; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 193; F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch* (Marburg, 1895), pp. 197 sq.

²⁷ Movsēs Xorenac'i, *Matenagrut'iwnk'* (Venice, 1865), Bk. iii, ch. 65, p. 266.

²⁸ *Mogpet/Mōbadh*, Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 511 n. 35; Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 99, 118 sqq. 320, 519; Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. IV, pp. 1087 sqq.; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 195.

²⁹ Elišē, ch. ii, p. 23.

³⁰ V. Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk' Hayoc'* (Erevan, 1964), vol. I, pp. xi sq., xvi sq. This fact is clearly asserted in the 16th canon of the council of Šahapivan (A. D. 444/5), *ibid*, p. 455; Mxit'ar Goš, *Datastanagirk' Hayoc'*, ed. by V. Bastameanc' (Vašaršapat, 1880), p. 26. In part ii, Mxit'ar Goš speaks about the judgements of kings, princes and judges, especially pp. 311, 332, 422, 434 sqq. See also X. Samuēlean, *Mxit'ar Goš Datastanagirk'n* (Vienna, 1911), pp. 117 sq. 136-142, 145-148 Manandyan, *Feodalism*, p. 76; Kherumian, "Féodalité", pp. 19 sq.; S. E. Hakobyan, "Soc'ialakan Haraberut'-yunneri Artac'olumd Kanonagirk' Hayoc -um", *P-BH* (1966), no. 4, pp. 71-79; X. A. T'orosyan, "Dataranayin Hamakargd Mijnadaryan Hayastanum", *Teł* (1965), no. 12, pp. 91-96.

of the land.³¹ The political and legal centre of the nation shifted to the national ecclesiastical councils called *Ašxarhažoļov*. These councils were held under the auspices of the Catholicoi and discussed national, ecclesiastical and legal matters.

Below the great landowning *naxarar* class stood the class of minor nobility who are called in the sources *azatk'* and *ostanikk'*.³² They found themselves in the same relation to the feudal lord of their province as the latter to the King. The feudal cavalry was mainly composed of the members of the class of minor nobles. For the services they rendered to the throne or the *naxarar*, the *azatk'* and *ostanikk'* were given conditional land holdings known as *xostakk'* (*dominium utile*).³³ They were also given secondary offices (*ministeria*) in the court or the administration of the land, such as judgeships.³⁴ In the sources the social and legal status of the class of minor nobles together with the higher nobility is described as *azatut'iwn*, in contrast to the *Tiers-État* who were *anazat*, and their social status is called *carayut'iwn* (service and not bondage). As such the nobles were free from the payment of tribute and enjoyed personal inviolability.³⁵ The clergy in general were regarded as members of the *azat* class.

Distinct from the nobiliar class and below them stood the *ramikk'*³⁶ – the city dwellers, including the artisans and merchants, together with the

³¹ Bastameanc', *Datastanagirk'*, "naxadrut'iwn", ch. 5, pp. 26 sq.

³² In the sources we see the following orders *naxarark'*, *azatk'* and *ostanikk'*, see P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 3, p. 67, ch. 15, p. 116; Łazar, ch. 1, p. 4; Agat'angelos, *Patmut'iwn* (Venice, 1830), ch. 111, p. 588. *Azat* meant at once 'free' and 'noble'; it comes from *azn*, meaning birth or origin, and *azat* coming from it a, someone having a noble birth. See Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 92 sq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 94 n. 137, 124 sq. n. 215, 126 sq. nn. 216-221. Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 342, says, "It is also possible that the term *azat* designated the son of a *naxarar*." See also *idem*, "Aspect", pp. 143 sqq.; Grousset, *Histoire*, p. 294. For the etymology see Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. I, pp. 25-28; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, pp. 91 sq. On *ostanik*, the minor nobility of the royal province, see Elišē, ch. i, p. 10, ch. iv, p. 92; Łazar, ch. 36, p. 209, ch. 41, p. 231, ch. 93, p. 554, ch. 99, p. 581; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 95-104; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 125 sq. n. 215; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 359-361, 413 nn. 54-55, 523 n. 85; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, pp. 215 sq.

³³ *Xostakk'* (*dominium utile*), the 'fief', 'feod' and 'lehn' of western feudalism; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 161; Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. II, pp. 595 sq.; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 103-118; *idem*, *History*, vol. II, pt. ii, pp. 252-263; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 126.

³⁴ 16th canon of the council of Šahapivan, Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I, p. 455; *supra*, p. 13, n. 30.

³⁵ Movsēs Xorenac'i, Bk. iii, ch. 20, p. 206; Elišē, ch. vii, p. 200; Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I, pp. 433, 435 sq., 437, 442; N. Akinean, *Šahapivani žoļovin kanonnerd* (Vienna, 1950), p. 74; Kherumian, "Féodalité", p. 20; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 126 sq. nn. 218, 219; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 93 sq., 123 sqq.

³⁶ For the etymology of *ramik* see Ačarean, *Armatakan*, vol. V, p. 1261; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 233. See also, Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 127 sq. n. 222; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 149, 151 sqq.; Hakobyan, *Gyulac'iut'yun*, vol. I, pp. 268-275.

šinakank³⁷ (rural population), forming the *Tiers-État*. As mentioned above, the sources describe them as *anazat* (lit. ‘not free’); it should not be taken with the meaning of ‘slave’ but as the taxpaying class. The fact that the *šinakank* were also *ramik* is clear from the evidence of the sources; nevertheless, the two are not synonymous.³⁸ During the post-Arsacid period *ramik* included both the rural and urban population, but later it came to be used more for the city dwellers.³⁹ The city dwellers were more privileged than the rural people because the latter had slowly lost many of their social liberties and had become serfs, bound to the land. Though they had personal freedom and were not slaves, yet they were politically, economically and socially subordinate to the feudal lords. This subordination meant that they had to pay a number of imposts, give free labour to their lords and at times of national emergency render military service.⁴⁰ Finally, at the bottom of the social scale stood the slaves who were mostly prisoners and worked in mines, on constructions and in households as servants.⁴¹

C - The Church in her Feudal Background

When Christianity was declared the State religion at the beginning of the fourth century,⁴² the Church adapted herself to the socio-political and territorial

³⁷ For the etymology of *šinakan* see šēn in Ačæran, *Armatakan*, vol. V, pp. 337-343; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, pp. 213 sq.; Toumanoff, *ibid*; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 154-184; *idem*, *History*, vol. II, pt. i, pp. 354-385; Hakobyan, *Gyulac’iut’yun*, vol. I, pp. 276-301; Samuëlean, *Mxit’ar Goš*, pp. 297-308.

³⁸ P’awstos, Bk. iii, ch. 21, p. 54 says, “and moreover not withstanding the rustic common people”. (այլ եւ ի շինականաց անգամ ոսմիկ մարդկանն); Movsēs Xorenac’i, Bkc. iii, ch. 7, p. 192, “The common peasants”. (զոսմիկ շինականն).

³⁹ In the Bible the common people of Susa are called *Ramik*, Esther 1:5; similarly in Lazar, ch. 99, p. 581, the people of the town who rushed to the Church to see Vahan Mamikonean are put in the following order, *Naxarark’*, *Azatk’*, *Ostanikk’* and *Ramikk’*; see also Drasxanakertc’i, p. 162. According to Movsēs Xorenac’i, Bk. ii, ch. 8, p. 81, King Vałaršak ordered that the honour and dignity of the urban people should be higher than that of the rural people, and that the peasants should honour the urban people.

⁴⁰ On the socio-economic status of the *Šinakan* see Adontz, “Aspect”, pp. 150 sqq.; *idem*, *Armenia*, pp. 361-367; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 165, 185-191, 205-210; Samuëlean, *Mxit’ar Goš*, pp. 297-300; Kherumian, “Féodalité”, pp. 22-26; Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 294 sq. Hakobyan, *Gyulac’iut’yun*, vol. I, pp. 276-301, emphasizes the legal freedom the *šinakans* had and does not think they were on their way to serfdom. Adontz’s view that *ramiks* were the serfs of princes while *šinakans* were free peasants is refuted by Manandyan and Toumanoff.

⁴¹ Hakobyan, *Gyulac’iut’yun*, vol. I, pp. 210-268; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 233-240; Kherumian, “Féodalité”, pp. 30 sqq.; Inčičean, *Hnaxosut’iwn*, vol. II, pp. 67-95.

⁴² Scholars have put the date of the conversion between the second decade of the third century and the beginning of the fourth; for a critical review of the sources and literature on the

structure of the land. Adontz has summed up the situation superbly in the following words:

The bitter struggle for the nationalization of the Church in Armenia was in reality for its *naxararization*, for the transfer of *naxarar* customs into the ecclesiastical sphere...Wherever the Church was successful in accomplishing this, it became *naxarar*-national, but in the parts of the country where, under the influence of Imperial policy, it failed or did not see the necessity of adapting to local forms, the Armenian Church remained a part of the common ecclesiastical structure. This political framework for ecclesiastical events is a fundamental factor in the isolation of the Armenian Church from the Catholic Church, regardless of dogmatic principles or disagreements.⁴³

Thus the Church conformed to the feudal pattern both in her external hierarchical structure and in her internal organization.

Since Armenia was politically decentralized and divided into a number of principalities (*naxararut'iwink'*), the Church was similarly decentralized and divided. Ecclesiastical dioceses – bishoprics – tended to correspond to the political divisions of the land; hence, each principality was at the same time a political and ecclesiastical unit. In this respect the Armenian Church differed from the Western Church, where the ecclesiastical administration was modelled on the civil organization of the Empire; the chief city of each district became the seat of the bishop, the provincial capital the seat of the metropolitan and the imperial capital the residence of the 'arch-metropolitan' or Patriarch.⁴⁴ In Armenia the urban centres were not the seats of ecclesiastical dignitaries, and unlike the bishops in the west they were not identified with the name of their place of residence. The bishops in Armenia bore the same title – territorial or patronymic – as their patron *naxarar* – such as, the bishop of Ayrarat, the bishop of Tarawn, the bishop of Tayk', also Siwneac' episkopos, Arcruneac', Rštuneac', Amatuneac', Anjewac'eac' episkopos, or Bagratuneac' episkopos and Mamikonēic' episkopos.⁴⁵

conversion see M.-L. Chaumont, *Recherches*, pp. 131-164; see also Fr. Tournébiz, *Histoire Politique et Religieuse de l'Arménie* (Paris, 1910), pp. 400-462; Manandyan, *History*, vol. II, pt.i, pp. 116-128; and M. Ormanean, *Azgapatum* Constantinople, 1912), vol. I, cols. 53 sqq.

⁴³ *Armenia*, p. 166; cf. Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 126 sq.

⁴⁴ On the Byzantine ecclesiastical organization see F. Dvornik, *The Idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), pp. 3-38; A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1971), at the back in the notes, pp. 381; 401 sq., 406, 410, 417, 429, 434, 441, 494; for tables showing the correspondences of bishoprics and cities see Appendix IV, pp. 522-552; E. Herman, "The Secular Church", CMH, vol. IV, pt. ii, pp. 106 sq., 110 sq.

⁴⁵ Princely dynastic names were either toponymic or patronymic; it is very difficult to distinguish between the two because the *naxarars* either bore the regional name or gave their

The authority of each bishop depended on the political and military power of his patron prince and the extent of his territory. The Mamikonids had three bishops: that of Tarawn called 'Mamikonēic' Episkopos', of Tayk' and of Bagrewand. The royal province of Ayrarat was the episcopal see of the chief bishop of Armenia – the Catholicos. Even the Catholicoi did not have a permanent residence, they moved from Vałaršapat (Ējmiacin) to Dvin, in A. D. 485, at the time of Catholicos Yovhannēs Mandakuni (478-490); from Dvin to Ał t'amar in Vaspurakan at the time of Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i (898-929), in A. D. 927; to Ani at the time of Catholicos Sargis I Sewanc'i (992-1019); and to Cilicia after the disappearance of the Armenian Kingdom in Great Armenia.⁴⁶

But, even so, the Catholicoi often preferred to reside in their native villages by building a cathedral and patriarchal residence. The inherent dangers of such a system are obvious: the bishops, encouraged by the expansionist appetites of their patron *naxarars*, would undoubtedly try to enhance their own influence by enlarging their sees or to interfere in the affairs of neighbouring dioceses. Armenian ecclesiastical councils are full of canons condemning such acts of intervention that created friction and ill will among the higher clergy. And since each prince was also the highest political, military and legal authority in his own province, the bishop found himself in an extremely difficult situation, torn between loyalty to the local *naxarar* and obedience to the Catholicos. Often local ties, being stronger and closer, won and the bishop was forced to back his patron prince in his political and even religious policies. In this manner the bishops unwittingly contributed to the further fragmentation of both the Church and the State.

Hierarchically the Church conformed to the feudal stratification of the nobiliar class. Just as the *naxarars* ranked in importance according to their thrones (*gahs*) and dignity (*patiw*), similarly the bishops had an ascending scale, with the Catholicos forming the apex. Step'annos Orbelean records:

Then saint Gregory also established the ecclesiastical hierarchy (lit. choir), the thrones [*gahs*] and dignity [*patiw*] of the bishops. He permitted thirty-six bishops to

dynastic name to the district. The region under the control of a princely house was designated by the plural form of the dynastie name, such as Siwnik', Rštunik', Amatunik', Xorxorunik'. The prince of each district was called the prince of this province or that canton, using the genitive plural form, ending in 'eac' ', of the toponym or the patronym, such as Siwneac' iřxan (forming the surname Siwni, e.g., Vasak Siwni) or Mamikonēic' iřxan (forming the surname Mamikonean, e.g., Vardan II Mamikonean), Bagratuneac' iřxan (forming the surname Bagratuni, e.g., Ařot Bagratuni). Similarly, the bishops bore either the patronym of the ruling dynasty of the district or the toponym. For a discussion of Armenian nomenclature see Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 129 sqq. n. 229.

⁴⁶ Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 321, 734, 777, 931, 944.

sit with him on thrones and cushions with gold ornaments, eighteen on the right and eighteen on the left. The first on the right was the bishop of Hark' and the first on the left that of Basean; as for the (bishop) of Siwnik', he let him sit on the seventh throne on the right hand side...⁴⁷

In importance the Catholicos ranked with the King and the bishops with the *naxarars*.

The clergy as a social stratum were part of the nobiliar (*azat*) class. The sources emphasize the fact that the Church and the clergy were free from the payment of tribute to the Armenian king, the Sassanian great king or the local feudal lord, on the basis of the ordinance of king Trdat and Gregory the Illuminator. Elišē records of Denšapuh, an official of the Sassanian king Yazdkart II (439-457):

First, he reduced the *azatut'iwn* (tax-exemption) of the Church into servitude. Second, the Christian monks who were living in hermitages, he cast under the same census.⁴⁸

Likewise, from the holy Church – which was in Christ *azat* (tax-exempt) according to the ordination of our forefathers from the beginning – you levied taxes.⁴⁹

The fact that the Church property was free from taxation is stated in the thirty eighth canon of Catholicos Sahak Part'ew (387-436): "...therefore, monasteries received districts and fields free from all the exactions of princes."⁵⁰ This is further affirmed by the evidence of the fifth canon of Catholicos Nersēs and bishop Neršapuh Mamikonēic'.⁵¹

Being members of the *azat* class, the clergy were greatly influenced by the morals and manners of their social peers. The *azats* led mainly a military life; the higher clergy themselves were often soldiers before their elevation to the spiritual office. Catholicos Nersēs Part'ew was an officer in the service of the king before becoming Catholicos.⁵² The same is true of his namesake,

⁴⁷ Step'annosi Siwneac' *Episkoposi Patmut'iwn Tann Sisakan*, ed. M. Emin (Moscow, 1861), p. 16.

⁴⁸ Elišē, ch. ii, p. 22.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 46.

⁵⁰ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I, p. 395; cf. 9th canon of the council of Dvin in A. D. 645, *ibid*, vol. II, pp. 209 sq. ; *infra*, p. 103.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, vol. I, p. 480 says that those who are deprived of the clerical privileges, for one reason or another, are to pay tribute on their land and water, implying that those who continued in the service of the Church were free from such imposts.

⁵² P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 3, p. 68.

Catholicos Nersēs III. Šinoł. (641-661/2), during the period of Arab invasions.⁵³ Mesrop Mašt'oc' was the *hazarapet* of Armenia before becoming a clergyman,⁵⁴ and we read that Catholicos Zawēn (377-381) instructed his priests to wear military uniforms.⁵⁵ The fact that members of the clergy often carried on spiritual and military duties simultaneously is confirmed by the number of canons condemning such behaviour.⁵⁶ This aspect of the feudalization of the Church is important for us because the Arabs, during the Umayyad Caliphate, left the clergy unmolested as long as they were not actively belligerent.⁵⁷

In her internal organization and economic structure the Armenian Church conformed to the feudal pattern also; firstly as the offices were hereditary among princely dynasties, similarly spiritual offices were hereditary. During the Arsacid kingdom there were two catholicosal dynasties – the Gregorid Part'ew dynasty, founded by the Illuminator, and the Albianos dynasty of Manazkert. The bishops of different principalities were probably hereditary as well, though we have no evidence from the sources. We have, however, plenty of evidence in canons of the councils of the Armenian Church that there were hereditary priestly houses. The practice of hereditary priesthood in the Armenian Church was condemned in the 33rd canon of the council of Trullo, of A. D. 692:

So also the other custom of the Armenians, to ordain only descendants of the families of priests as clerics, and to appoint untensured men as cantors and lectors.⁵⁸

This was regarded to be a Jewish custom perpetuated by the Armenians, but in reality it had nothing to do with Judaism or the Old Testament: it was only an expression of the feudalization of the Armenian Church.

⁵³ Sebēos, p. 140; *infra*, pp. 87 sq.

⁵⁴ Koriwn, *Patmut'iwn Varuc' ew Mahuan Srboyn Mesropay Vardapeti Meroy T'argmanč'i* (Venice, 1894), pp. 13 sq.

⁵⁵ P'awstos, Bk. vi, ch. 2, p. 263.

⁵⁶ The 6th, 46th and 49th canons of Catholicos Sahak Part'ew, Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'* vol. I, pp. 370 sq., 404 sq., 409 sq.; 12th canon of Catholicos Nersēs and Neršapuh Mamikonēic' episkopos, *ibid*, vol. I, p. 483; 6th canon of Dvin (A. D. 645), *ibid*, vol. II, p. 205. See also, the canons of Lord Simēon, Catholicos of Albania, in the *History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movsēs Dasxuranc'i*, trans. C.J.F. Dowsett (London, 1961), pp. 198-202. Cf. Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 146-7.

⁵⁷ See Māwardī, *Kitāb al-Aḥkām al-Sultaniyah*, ed. M. Enger (Bonn, 1853), pp. 68, 231 sq.; M. Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, 1955), pp. 103 sq.

⁵⁸ C. J. Hefele, *A History the Councils of the Church*, trans. W. R. Clark (London, 1896, vol. V, p. 228; French trans. C. J. Hefele, *Histoire des conciles*, trans. H. Leclercq (Paris, 1909), vol. I, III, p. 567; cf. Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 286 sq.

Secondly, the lower clergy – viz., the parish priests – like the minor nobility were given conditional land tenure for services rendered in the church as *Xostakk’ (dominium utile)*.⁵⁹ We read that with the spread of Christianity king Trdat, in an attempt to guarantee the subsistence of the priests:

... in general allotted in all of his dominion four pieces of land in all the rural places and seven pieces of land⁶⁰ in the little towns, for the service of the ministry of the Church...⁶¹

The Church also acquired the property and wealth of the pagan temples – such as the estates belonging to the temples of Anahit and Tir in Artasat,⁶² the village of T’ordan and its surrounding,⁶³ the town of Ani (Kamax),⁶⁴ and the treasures of the temples of Anahit, T’iln and Mihr in Bagayrič.⁶⁵ Bishops were given lands as well: after the annihilation of the Manawazeian and Orduni dynasties King Xosrov Kotak (330-338) gave the village of Manazkert and its surroundings to bishop Albianos.⁶⁶ Throughout the years people of all classes made pious endowments to the Church of hamlets, estates, treasures of gold and silver, precious raiments and flocks.⁶⁷ Besides all of these, the Church had other

⁵⁹ 6th canon of King Vač’agan, Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk’*, vol. II, p. 95; trans. in C. J. F. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc’i*, pp. 51 sq.; *supra*, p. 14, n. 33.

⁶⁰ The Armenian has *Erdoy Hol*; the Greek Agathangelus, ed. Paul de Lagarde, AGWG vol. 35 (1888), p. 76 translates it as ἀποῦρας, 100 cubits square; see H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1966), p. 245; G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 227 sq.; Manandyan, *Feodalism*, pp. 134 sq.

⁶¹ Agat’angelos, ch. 119, p. 617 sq., Greek version Paul de Lagarde, *Agathangelus*, p. 76; Arabic version, A. N. Ter-Levondyan *Agat’angelosi Arabakan nor Xmbagrut’yunā* (Erevan, 1968, p. 15; cf. P’awstos, Bk. V, ch. 31, p. 231.

⁶² Agat’angelos, ch. 108, p. 578.

⁶³ *Ibid*, ch. 109, pp. 582 sq.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, ch. 110, p. 584.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 585, 587.

⁶⁶ P’awstos, Bk. iii, ch. 4, pp. 9 sq., Bk. vi, ch. 10, p. 269.

⁶⁷ 3rd canon of Vač’agan, King of Albania, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc’i*, p. 51 “A noble and a member of the royal family shall in the course of his life give with his own hand for his soul a horse, saddled and harnessed, and whatever else he can afford. If he should not give this in his lifetime, his family shall give it after his death.” 5th canon, *ibid*, “A noble or villager or other layman shall not omit to give one offering per annum in commemoration of the dead, as much as he can afford; one shall not deprive the dead of a share of their gain. If the dead man had horses, one shall give to the church one horse which he would desire; if he had cattle, one ox which he would desire.” Cf. 52nd canon of Catholicos Sahak Part’ew, Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk’*, vol. I, pp. 412 sq., on endowments made by princes for the salvation of their souls or for those of the departed. In P’awstos Bk. V, ch. 44., p. 258, Manuēl Mamikonean, on his death bed, distributed treasures of gold and silver to the poor and left great estates to the Church.

sources of income: the dues that the people had to pay to the Church, of tithes and first fruits,⁶⁸ and the fines that were collected from transgressors through the courts.⁶⁹ If we add, to all the above, the lands that were the patrimonial allod of the catholicos house⁷⁰ – though technically these were not church lands – we may have a fair picture of the economic might of the Church. This economic power, undoubtedly, entailed political power, which in turn, inevitably led to confrontations with the secular authorities.

D – Church-State Relations to the End of the Sixth Century

It would be misleading to give the impression that the Church, starting with very little, within seven or eight decades acquired all the wealth and property designated in the sources. We saw that when Christianity was declared the State Religion all the large possessions of the pagan temples passed by decree to the Church. Many of the servants of the pagan cult and pagan priestly families became Christian ministers. Along with the wealth and personnel of the pagan religion the Church inherited the feudal rivalries between the secular princes and the old pagan hierarchy. Despite the conflicting interests of the secular and spiritual polities, the confrontation was temporarily averted during the reigns of King Trdat the Great (299-330) and his son Xosrov III Kodak (330-338). Again it would be wrong to give the impression that Christianity entered Armenia and became the State Religion only through the endeavours of St. Gregory the Illuminator. We have ample historical evidence that there were Christian communities in Armenia before the coming of St. Gregory to Arme-

⁶⁸ 4th canon of Vač'agan, *ibid*, p. 51. "This shall be the rule concerning the fruits (of the earth to be given) to the priest by the people. He who is rich shall give 4 bushels (*grīw*) of wheat, 6 of barley, and 16 jugs of sweet (wine); the poor man shall give half a loaf of bread and as much wine as he can; and nothing shall be taken from him who possesses no field or vineyard. Those who for the sake of their soul give in excess of this do well; as Paul says 'he who sows abundantly, shall reap abundantly' (Gal. vi,7). He who has sheep in his household shall give one sheep, three fleeces and one cheese; (he who has horses, one foal; and he who has cattle, one calf)." Cf. canon 18, *ibid*, p. 53. See also canons 18 and 32 of Sahak Part'ew, Hakobyan, *op. cit.* vol. I, pp. 378, 384; P'awstos, Bk. V, ch. 31, p. 229.

⁶⁹ *Supra*, pp.10 sqq.; 14th canon of Vač'agan, *Dasxuranc'i*, trans. Dowsett, p. 52; 4th canon of council of Dvin A. D. 645), Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'* vol. II, p. 203.

⁷⁰ Łazar, Bk. i, ch. 18, p. 111 reports that Catholicos Sāhak (Isaac) had no son but one daughter who was married to Hamazasp Mamikonean; he gave all his estates, lands and villages to his daughter, and thus the patrimonial allods of the Part'ew dynasty passed to the Mamikonids through marriage. As stated above these lands were not church lands and therefore could pass to laity.

nia at the end of the third century. Syrian missionaries from Edessa came to Armenia and established churches mostly in the southern provinces.⁷¹ The Christianity that St. Gregory introduced was western, Caesarean, in contradistinction to the earlier Syrian Church, and it quickly won the upper hand, superseding the Syrian Christianity. Thus the Christianity preached by St. Gregory became a westernizing factor in Armenia.

Socially Armenia was more like Sassanian Persia – a feudal state with dynastic princes who were practically independent of the King – but in religion it was closer to the Roman Empire. No sooner had the political circumstances changed than conflict between the Church and State became inevitable. The Armenian Church had close ties with the Caesarean Church; the metropolitans of Caesarea consecrated the chief bishops (*episcoposapetk'*) of Armenia.⁷² We should, however, be careful not to turn this relation into an absolute dependence, as most Mkhitarist fathers claim, for though Armenia was mostly under Roman protection till the partition towards the end of the fourth c., it was not an Imperial province but a protected nation. Therefore Armenia was not, in the literal sense of the word, part of the ecclesiastical provincial unit of Caesarea. This relation could be characterized as spiritual-formal and not ecclesiastical or hierarchical. After the death (or murder?) of Catholicos Nersēs I Part'ew (353-373),⁷³ King Pap (368-374) appointed a new chief bishop called Yusik, of the Albianos house of Manazkert (373-377), without any recourse to the metro-

⁷¹ On the two currents of Christianity in Armenia see Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 270-275; E. Ter-Minassiantz, *Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen*, TU, N. F. vol. XI (or vol. XXVI) (Leipzig, 1904, pp. 1-29; K. Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church* (London, 1965, pp. 80-85; Gelzer, *Die Anfänge der armenischen Kirche*, trans. H. Y. T'orocean (Venice, 1896), p. 161; A. Meillet, "Le mot Ekelec'i", REA, vol. IX (1929), pp. 134 sqq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 5-41.

⁷² For a discussion of the relation between the Armenian and the Caesarean Churches see Ter-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 6 sqq. n. 3; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 158-161; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 281 sq. An opposing view is held by the following: Gelzer T'orocean, *Anfänge*, pp. 64 sq.; Kogean, *Ekelec'i*, pp. 79-94; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 73-76, 86-102; P. Hamēlean, "Hay Episkoposneru ink'naglux jernadrut'ean masin nkatolūt'iwn mē", Baz (1952), pp. 149-152.

⁷³ Both P'awstos, Bk. v, ch. 24, pp. 216 sq., and Movsēs Xorenac'i, Bk. iii, ch. 38, p. 228 say that Catholicos Nersēs I was poisoned by King Pap. See also "Yałags Zarmic' Srboyn Grigori", in SH vol. vi (Venice, 1853), pp. 84 sqq.; "Patmut'iwn Srboyn Nersisi ew Giwt Nšxarac'", SH, vol. vii, (Venice, 1853), pp. 20 sq.; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 74, 417 sq.; J. Markwart, *Südarmenien und die Tigrisquellen* (Wien, 1930), p. 157; Gelzer-T'orocean, *Anfänge*, p. 124; Tournèize, *Histoire*, p. 488; and Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 282, all say that he was murdered by Pap. Manandyan, *History*, vol. II, pt. i, and Ormanean, vol. I, col. 154 argue that he died of natural causes. Despite their ingenious arguments the sources affirm the contrary.

politan of Caesarea. This act provoked the extreme indignation of St. Basil the Great who, according to P'awstos, in a local council revoked the authority of the chief bishop in Armenia to consecrate bishops.⁷⁴ Though internally the supremacy of Yusik could not be challenged, yet it undermined the spiritual authority of the chief bishop of Armenia and reduced him to the status of a court bishop. Nevertheless, this episode precipitated the break with Caesarea and laid the foundation for the independence of the Armenian Church.

The economic, political and institutional interests of the Church clashed with those of the crown. The Church joined forces with the *naxarars* in the fight against the attempts of the crown to assert its authority over the feudal lords,⁷⁵ and thus was instrumental in the partition of Armenia and the eventual termination of the monarchy. After the partition of A. D. 387,⁷⁶ not only the Church but even more the State faced the threat of extinction. King Vramšapuh (393-413/4), King over the eastern sector, buried the hatchet and worked closely with Catholicos Sahak I Part'ew (387-436) in an attempt to avert a national calamity. The outcome of this cooperation was the creation of the Armenian alphabet and the beginning of Armenian literature around the year A. D. 400.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ P'awstos, Bk. v, ch. 29, pp. 226 sq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 282 sq.

⁷⁵ The feudal interests of the Church and *naxarars* coincided and clashed with those of the monarchy: see the case of Aršakašēn, P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 12, p. 105-109; Movsēs Xorenac'i, Bk. iii, ch. 27, pp. 213 sq. Hayr Mardpet exterminated the Manawazeian and Orduni dynasties on behalf of King Tiran and massacred the Kamsarakans on behalf of Aršak II, P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 19, p. 129. He threatened to expropriate Aštišat for the benefit of the crown during the patriarchate of Nersēs I Part'ew, P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 14, pp. 114 sq. The murder of Gnel brought things to a crisis, Catholicos Nersēs I left the royal court never to return again until the death of Aršak II, P'awstos, Bk. iv, chs. 15, 19, pp. 118-123, 129. King Pap took drastic steps against the Church, he ordered that the tribute of the "first fruits" and the tithe given to the Church should be discontinued, P'awstos, Bk. v, ch. 31, p. 229. He took five of the seven pieces of land away from the Church, and allowed two clergymen only for every village – a priest and a deacon. Finally, he closed the nunneries and monasteries, P'awstos, Bk. v, ch. 31, pp. 230 sq.

⁷⁶ On the partition of A. D. 387 see *infra* p. 65, n. 17.

⁷⁷ H. Ačaṙean, "Hayoc' Grerā", HA, vols. XXIV (1910), pp. 46-52, 171-176, 212-216, 311-315, XXV (1911), pp. 231-242, 347-365, XXVI (1912), pp. 133-147; J. Marquart, "Über das armenische Alphabet in Verbindung mit der Biographie des heil. Mašt'oc'", trans. A. Vardanean, *Patmut'iwn Hayerēn Nšanagrēru ew Varuc' S. Maštoc'i*, HA, vols. XXV (1911), pp. 529-544, 673-684, XXVI (1912), pp. 41-54, 199-216, 657-666, 742-750; P. Ananian, "Vark' Surb Mesrop Maštoc'i", Baz (1962) pp. 208-236 (esp. pp. 224-236); (1963), pp. 237-246; (1964), pp. 105-112, 182-190; (1965), pp. 6-13, 206-214; (1966), pp. 86-94, 161-167, 209-215; (1967), pp. 5-11, 58-69, 197-205, 243-251; (1968), pp. 95-103, (1969), pp. 1-8, 97-108; P. P. Peeters, "Pour l'histoire des origines de l'alphabet arménien", REA, vol. IX (1929), pp. 203-237; A. Hovhanissian, "L'alphabet arménien et son action historique", REA, N. S. vol. II (1965), pp. 361-373.

With the termination of the monarchy in eastern Armenia (ca. A. D. 427/8), the Sassanian control over the land became firmer. While guarding the social and feudal privileges of the *naxarars*, the court of Ctesiphon tried to isolate Armenia religiously and culturally from the Byzantine Empire. Firstly, the Sassanian administration tried to break the ties between the Armenian and Imperial Churches. They appointed as chief bishops men who would conform to their will – especially Syrian bishops or bishops who were from southern cantons where the Syrian Christian influence was strongest. It was for this reason that Catholicos Sahak I was replaced by an Armenian collaborator, called Surmak, of the Albianos house and later by two Syrians.⁷⁸

Secondly, a period of persecutions followed (ca. A. D. 450), when King Yazdgar II adopted the policy of forced mazdaization. This policy is clearly formulated in the conversation between the King and his *hazarapet* Mihrnerseh⁷⁹ who defeated the Armenians at the battle of Avarayr, in A. D. 451.

For you yourself and all the Aryans (i. e., Persians) know the land of Armenia, how great and profitable it is, and that it is near and borders the dominion of the Emperor; it has the same faith and religion, for the Emperor has authority over them. If you also tame them to our faith and they grow accustomed to it, and are able to perceive that if up to the present they were misguided, now they should come to the (right) path; thenceforth they will love you and this our land of the Aryans, and they will abstain and depart completely from the Emperor, his religion and country... And when the Armenians are firmly ours, then the Iberians and Albanians are ours indeed.⁸⁰

Following this declaration of policy, the Church and *naxarars* were subjected to tremendous pressures. Yazdgar II wanted to convert the land, first, by winning the feudal princes and then forcing the Church into submission. He promoted those *naxarars* who conformed and deprived the others of their privileges. He even imposed taxes on the clergy and Church property, appointed a Persian *hazarapet*, and a chief magian (*mogpet*) as judge of the land.⁸¹ This policy of forcible Mazdaization evoked a strong reaction among the Armenians, leading to two bloody uprisings – the revolution of A. D. 451 under Vardan II

⁷⁸ On Surmak see Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 99-102; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 211 sq.; Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 318. The two Syrian bishops were Brk'išoy and Smuēl, Movsēs Xorenac'i, Bk. iii, ch. 64, p. 265, ch. 65, pp. 266 sq.; Łazar, ch. 15, pp. 79 sqq.; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 95, 99, 422 sq.; Ter Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 25 sq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 213 sqq.

⁷⁹ On the name see Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 205.

⁸⁰ Łazar, ch. 21, pp. 127 sq.

⁸¹ Ehišē, ch. 2, pp. 22 sq.; *supra*, pp. 12 sq. nn. 27, 28, 29.

Mamikonean,⁸² and the longdrawn guerilla war (A. D. 481-483) led by Vahan Mamikonean.⁸³ These two rebellions, coupled with external and internal factors, forced the court of Ctesiphon to give up its attempt and re-establish the old order. After the council of Dvin (A. D. 555), however, (where the Armenian Church formally rejected the council of Chalcedon and Tome of Leo) the attitude of the Sassanian administration markedly changed towards the Armenian Church.⁸⁴ Despite the fact that this cordial relationship was temporarily impaired in A. D. 571/2 when Vardan III Mamikonean killed the Persian governor and fled to Constantinople,⁸⁵ the Sassanian court was able to achieve its end and isolated Armenia from Byzantium. In her struggle against Mazdaization and Nestorian influence (the official Church recognized by the Sassanian administration), on the one hand, and the religio-political assimilation of the Byzantine Empire, on the other, the Armenians established their own national Church with monophysitism as her accepted doctrine.

E – Review of the Sources and Literature

The sources for the study of Church-State relations in Armenia during the Arab domination are basically Armenian. Arabic sources are only important in so far as they elucidate the historical and legal problems that arise as a result of studying the Armenian sources. The latter, along with Syrian and Byzantine historians, provide the legal and historical framework of the present research.

⁸² On the revolt of A. D. 451 see Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 189-207; Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 283-288; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 96 sq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 254-259.

⁸³ On the revolt of A. D. 481-483 see Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 215-229; Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 295 sq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 308-314.

⁸⁴ On the council of Dvin of A. D. 555 see *Girk' T't'oc'* (Tiflis, 1901), pp. 52-77, nine letters: *ibid*, "Saks Žołovoc' ", p. 221; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 35 sq., 130-175; Arsēn Catholicos of Iberia, trans. Melik'set Bek, *Vrac' Albiwmerā* (Erevan, 1934), vol. I, pp. 21-25; Step'anosi Taronec'woy Asolkan, *Patmut'iwn Tiezerakan*, 2nd ed. (St. Petersburg, 1855), pp. 82 sq.; Vardan Vardapet, *Hawak'umn Patmut'ean Vardanay Vardapeti Lusabaneal* (Venice, 1862), p. 84; trans. J. Muyldermans, *La Domination arabe en Arménie* (Paris, 1927), pp. 134 sq.; The colophon of a 14th century *Čaəntir* (selection of homilies), Venice Ms. n. 222, fols. 81^a-82^b, in B. Sarghissian, *Grand catalogue de manuscrits arméniens* (Venice, 1924), vol. II, col. 328; *Timotheus Ālurus* des Patriarchen von Alexandrien Widerlegung, armenischer Text, by K. Ter-Mekerttschian and E. Ter-Minassiantz (Leipzig, 1908), p. xi; Hefele-Leclercq, vol. II, pt. 2, pp. 1077-1080; Ter-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 40-59; Ter-Mkrtč'ean, *Knik' Hawatoy* (Ējmiacin, 1914), pp. 1xx sqq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 265 sq., 470 n. 39a; P. Ananean, "Patmakan Yišatakarān mē Duini b. Žołovk'i Masin", *Baz* (1956) pp. 111-121 (1958), pp. 64-71, 117-131.

⁸⁵ For the revolt of A. D. 571/2 see *infra*, p. 60, n. 5.

1 – Armenian Sources

Three important facts must be borne in mind while discussing the Armenian sources: firstly, most of the extant sources were written by the clergy, giving what could be termed the clerical view. Secondly, all of the Armenian sources have a strong anti-Arab and anti-Muslim bias which often distorted the picture they give of the Arabs and their religion. Finally, later sources on the whole simply repeat and re-edit the information provided by earlier works. There are, however, instances when the later sources seem to have access to an independent and reliable earlier tradition.

The Armenian sources can be divided into four categories: historic, legal, hagiographic and random sources – such as official documents, colophons and inscriptions. The important historians in their chronological order are Sebēos, Lewond, Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i, Movsēs Kałankatuac'i or Dasxuranc'i, Step'anos Taronec'i Asołik, Kirakos Ganjakec'i, Vardan Vardapet and Step'annos Siwnec'i – known also as Orbēlean. It is not possible to discuss all of the above mentioned works in the introduction; we shall only touch upon the important contemporary sources and mention the distinctive features of the remainder during the course of the work.

Sebēos⁸⁶ is the only historian of the seventh century who records the history of the Arab invasions. He ends his work with the accession of Mu^cāwiya, in A. D. 661, and as a contemporary his work is of great value. The work of Sebēos has been the subject of extensive controversy among modern scholars: Abgaryan⁸⁷ suggests that the author of the history was not Sebēos, the bishop of the Bagratunis who was present at the council of Dvin in A. D. 645, but a certain Xosrov. He also recommends a number of emendations to the text, some of which are controversial while others were already suggested by earlier scholars. T'orosyan,⁸⁸ however, has conclusively refuted many of his claims by pointing out all the parallel passages from Sebēos quoted by later historians. On the period prior to the seventh century Sebēos gives no precise dates, but for the history of the seventh century he not only quotes dates but also mentions the day of the month and the season of the year. While recounting political and military events he does not forget the affairs of the Church, mentioning the Catholicoi and their various activities. In ecclesiastical controversies he is strongly anti-Chalcedonian but at the same time in political orientation he is

⁸⁶ *Patmut'iwn Sebēosi Episkoposi i Herakln*, ed. K'. R. Patkanean St. Petersburg, 1879 ; Fr. trans. by F. Macler, *Histoire d'Héraclius, par l'évêque Sebēos* (Paris, 1904).

⁸⁷ G. V. Abgaryan, *Sebeosi Patmut'yunā ev Ananuni Ārelcvacā* (Erevan, 1965).

⁸⁸ X. T'orosyan, "Sebeos Patmič'ā ew Nra Erkā", BM (1969), no. 9, pp. 59-99.

equally opposed to the Arabs. Sebēos is the only historian who has recorded for posterity the text of the treaty between Mu^cāwiya and T'ēodoros Rštuni, that formed the legal basis for the autonomy of Armenia throughout the Umayyad Caliphate.⁸⁹ Sebēos has been translated into French by F. Macler and the part dealing with the Arab invasions of Armenia into German by H. Hübschmann.⁹⁰

The eighth century historian Lewond⁹¹ covers the period A. D. 632-788. In the first part of his work the dating is confused but later he is much more reliable, and towards the end of the history he gives a first-hand account of events in Armenia. His history is valuable because he provides information which is not found in either Arab or Byzantine sources. He has extensive information on Arab administrative policy, the change in the system of taxation at the beginning of the eighth century and the attitude of the Arabs toward the feudal nobility. He also speaks about the destruction caused by the Arab, Byzantine and Khazar attacks on Armenia. Like Sebēos he does not forget to mention ecclesiastical affairs and describes in great detail the attitudes of both Umayyad and ^cAbbāsīd Caliphates to the Armenian Church. He has two strong biases. First, he was commissioned to write his history by prince Šapuh Bagratuni; therefore, in the struggle between Grigor Mamikonean and Ašot Bagratuni, in the middle of the seventh century, his sympathies lay on the Bagratid side. He condemns the Mamikonean princes and their supporters as 'traitors' and 'deceitful nobles'. Secondly, he is vehemently anti-Arab to the point of being absurd.

Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i of the tenth century (d. circa A. D. 925), called *Patmaban* (historian), is a more critical historian.⁹² He often acted as a mediator between feuding Armenian Kings and between Armenian Kings and the Arab governor of Ādhārbayjān. His work is of importance for us because he gives information about Church affairs and Catholicoi not found in earlier sources. He might have had an ecclesiastical source which was unavailable to Lewond.

The anonymous seventh century work called *Narratio de Rebus Armeniae*, also known after the first word of the Greek text as *Diegesis* (Διήγησις),⁹³ is a history of the relations between the Armenian and Imperial Churches from the fourth to the end of the seventh century. This source could have been placed

⁸⁹ See *infra*, pp. 109 sq.

⁹⁰ *Zur Geschichte Armeniens und der ersten Kriege der Araber* (Leipzig, 1875).

⁹¹ *Patmut'iwn Lewondeay Meci Vardapeti Hayoc'*, 2nd ed. (St. Petersburg, 1887) trans. G. Chahnazarian, *Histoire des guerres et des conquêtes des Arabes en Arménie* (Paris, 1856).

⁹² *Yovhannu Kat'olikosi Drasxanakertec'woy Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* (Tiflis, 1912). Fr. trans. by M. J. Saint-Martin, *Histoire d'Arménie*, par le Patriarche Jean VI (Paris, 1841); very unsatisfactory.

⁹³ G. Garitte, *La Narratio de Rebus Armeniae*, CSLO vol. 132, sb. 4 (Louvain, 1952).

among the Byzantine sources except for the fact that Prof. G. Garitte,⁹⁴ in his monumental work, has shown that the Greek text is the mediocre translation of an original Armenian version that is lost. This source seems to have been used by two later authors: the document known as the "Letter of Patriarch Photius to the Armenian Catholicos Zacharia"⁹⁵ and the ninth century work of the Georgian Catholicos Arsen⁹⁶ on the schism between the Armenian and Georgian Churches. These sources underline aspects of Byzantino-Armenian ecclesiastical relations which do not emerge from the Armenian sources. The Armenian historians saw an event from a different angle or perhaps they simply disregarded the information not to their liking. As a result of the rediscovery of this source, most of the modern works on the Armenian Church stand in need of fundamental revision.

By legal sources I mean the *corpus juris canonici* of the Armenian Church. There were four important ecclesiastical councils in Armenia during the period under consideration.⁹⁷ These canons deal with social relations, disciplinary problems and dogmatic controversies. Since these were the decisions of councils in response to certain pressing questions, they can often be regarded as a better reflection of the state of affairs than that found in historians or chronographers. A critical edition of the canons has recently appeared in two volumes edited by Vazgen Hakobyan.⁹⁸

The hagiographic sources are basically the lives of saints and martyrs which have come down to us either separately, in the form of short biographies, or collected in the Menologion. Among those of special interest for us are the martyrologies of Dawit' Dvnec'i and Vahan Golt'nac'i.⁹⁹ There are two ver-

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 359-370.

⁹⁵ J. Laurent, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam* (Paris, 1919) pp. 309-316; Muyldermans, *Domination*, pp. 64-68, 128-138; Garitte, *Narratio*, *passim*; Tournebize, *Histoire*, pp. 142 sqq.; partially translated into German by D. H. Jordan, *Armenische Irenaeusfragmente* (Leipzig, 1913), in TU, 3rd series, vol. XXXVI, pp. 118; Yusik Ark'episkopos, "P'oti Jank'erā Hay Ekelec'in Miac'nelu K. Pōlsoy Kam Yunakan Ekelec'un", A, vol. 50 (1917), pp. 355-360, 499-506.

⁹⁶ Arsēn Catholicos, "Vrac' yev Hayoc' Bažanman Masin", trans. L. Melik'set-Bek, in *Vrac' Atbyurnerā Hayastani yev Hayeri Masin* (Erevan, 1934), vol. I, pp. 1-70. Garitte, *Narratio*, *passim*.

⁹⁷ Councils of Dvin in A. D. 645, *infra*, pp. 97-105; P'artaw, in A. D. 704, *infra*, pp. 248-251; Dvin in A. D. 719/20, *infra*, pp. 285-292; P'artaw, A. D. 768, *infra*, pp. 353-360.

⁹⁸ *Kanonagirk' Hayoc'* (Erevan, 1964, 1971).

⁹⁹ "V kayabanut'iwn Srboyn Dawt'i or i Duin Katarec'aw", in SH, vol. xix, pp. 85-96; M. Awgerean, *Liakatar Vark' ew V kayabanut'iwn Srhoc'* (Venice, 1810-1815), vol. VI, pp. 224-229; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, 386 b; *Le Synaxaire arménien de Ter Israel* (Paris, 1927), PO, vol. XXI, pp. 225 sq. "Ołbk' Vasn C'areac'n Ašxarhis Hayoc' ew V kayabanut'iwn Srboyn Vahanay Golt'nac'woy", SH, vol. xiii (Venice, 1854); Awgerean, *Liakatar Vark'*, vol. I, pp. 188-216, Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, f. 383 b; *Synaxaire*, *ibid*, p. 214.

sions, probably coming from one original source. According to the colophon of the longer version it was written by Artawazd the abbot of Erašxavork' in Arjkē, where Vahan stayed for a while on his way to Rušāfah. As a contemporary having personal contacts with Vahan, his story is important. The story in a much more abridged form was later incorporated in the Menologion. There is a fifteenth-century manuscript Menologion at the Bodleian Library¹⁰⁰ which I have often used because it is more reliable than the Synaxarion of Tēr Israyēl¹⁰¹ as it has come down to us.

A short history of the Menologion is found in the introduction of the Constantinople edition of A. D. 1834, called *Yaysmawurk' ǝst Kargi ǝntrelagoyn ǝrinaki Yaysmawurac' Tēr Israyēli*.¹⁰² A certain *vardapet* called Gagik, from the monastery of Atom, translated from Greek many lives of saints in the ninth century, and his work was called *Atomagir* (written by Atom). Patriarch Gregory Vkayasēr (Martyrophile), in the eleventh century, collected and translated many new lives of saints and homilies, and put them together in one big volume subsequently called *Čarantir* (collection of homilies). After him Tēr Israyēl, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, re-edited the *Čarantir* dividing the biographies and homilies according to the days of the month. This work came to be known as *Yaysmawurk'* (Menologion). Finally, Kirakos Vardapet Arewelc'i, in the fifteenth century, compiled a new Menologion using the work of Tēr Israyēl as a model.

There is some confusion about the date of Kirakos Vardapet Arewelc'i. Ališan¹⁰³ gives the colophon of the *Yaysmawurk'* compiled by Kirakos Arewelc'i in which the date of the completion of the work is given as AE 718/1269, and the work was undertaken in the city of Sis in Cilicia. It seems as though Kirakos Vardapet Arewelc'i who compiled the *Yaysmawurk'* and Kirakos Vardapet Ganjakec'i are one and the same person. The dates and the biographical information at our disposal about the two men correspond; some of the peculiar historical information found in the history is corroborated by the *Yaysmawurk'*; and Melik' - Ōhanjanyan¹⁰⁴ has indicated that the style of writing and the way in which biographical information is interwoven with the narrative of the two works have much in common.

¹⁰⁰ Ms. Marsh 438 (I-III) – Menologium, A. D. 1482.

¹⁰¹ PO, vol. V, fs. 3; VI, fs. 2; XV, fs. 3; XVI, fs. 1; XVIII, fs. 1; XIX, fs. 1; XXI, fss. 1-6.

¹⁰² A. Ł. Łazikean, *Haykakan Nor Matenagitut'iwn ew Hanragitaran Hay Keank'i* (Venice, 1909, 1912, vol. II, cols. 36 sqq).

¹⁰³ Ł. Ališan, *Hayapatum* (Venice, 1901), p. 107; Kirakos Ganjakec'i, *Patmut'yun Hayoc'*, ed. K. A. Melik' - Ōhanjanyan (Erevan, 1961), p. xi.

¹⁰⁴ Kirakos, pp. v-xi.

The Bodleian Msc. Menologion was most probably made from the *Yaysmawurk*’ compiled by Kirakos. The scribe who made the copy was called Mkrtič and the date given is AE 931/1482. It was copied at the monastery called Xulayo or Xulau (Խուլայո, Խուլաու) in the province of Kharput, during the Catholicate of Lord Sargis. There is a note on the binding of the work dated AE 957/1508 by a monk called Karapet Ganjajec’i (Գանջալեցի), probably a scribal error for Ganjakec’i (Գանջակեցի). Unfortunately Mkrtič does not say from which version he has copied the present Menologion.¹⁰⁵ However, there is another old Menologion of A. D. 1591 in the Vienna Mkhitarist Library, copied almost a century later, by a scribe called Yovhannēs.¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately the main colophon is lost but in some of the minor colophons Yovhannēs gives the name of the original compiler as Kirakos Vardapet Arewelc’i from the monastery of Getik. A comparison of the list of the contents of the Bodleian Ms. and that of the Vienna Mkhitarists gives us sufficient evidence to conclude that the Bodleian copy was made from a copy of the *Yaysmawurk*’ of the Kirakos tradition rather than from that of Tēr Israyēl.

Finally, among the random sources we must first mention the official documents related to Armenian ecclesiastical history that have come down to us in a volume known as the Book of Letters *Girk’ T’ht’oc*’.¹⁰⁷ These documents are mostly from the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, though later documents were added to the collection. The documents coming from the fifth to seventh centuries are arranged in a chronological order but the subsequent ones are put together haphazardly. This has led to the speculation that the Book of Letters, like the Book of Canon Law, was collected and edited by the great Catholicos Yovhannēs Ojneg’i surnamed the Philosopher.¹⁰⁸ We have, however, no positive evidence for this. The value of such documents is obvious; they are one of the best reflections of the situation when they were written. For our purposes one document is of special interest; the letter of Yovhannēs Catholicos Ojneg’i with the title “Saks Žołovoc’ or Elen i Hayk’ “ (concerning the councils that were in Armenia),¹⁰⁹ where the question of the penetration of Chalcedo-

¹⁰⁵ Ms. Marsh 438, fols. 590 sq.; S. Baronian and F. C. Conybeare, *Catalogue of the Armenian Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1918), cols. 32 sqq.

¹⁰⁶ J. Dashian, *Catalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Mechitharisten-Bibliothek zu Wien* (Wien, 1895), vol. I, pp. 559-568.

¹⁰⁷ *Girk’ T’ht’oc*’ (Tiflis, 1901) (BL).

¹⁰⁸ Ormanean, vol. I, col. 569; BL, “Introduction”, p.v.

¹⁰⁹ BL, pp. 220-233. The Mxit’arists in their endeavour to prove that Yovhannēs Ojneg’i was not against the council of Chalcedon say that this document is a forgery and it was not written by Ojneg’i. Their arguments, however, are weak, particularly when we read the anathe-

nianism is the key issue. Along with the official documents we should mention the colophons of manuscripts and inscriptions that have reached us. It is true that we do not possess any manuscript coming from the seventh or eighth centuries, yet scribes have often been careful to reproduce the original colophon before adding their own. These colophons provide us with such information as to who was the author, under what circumstances he wrote, who commissioned the work, some sort of dating and any other historic reference that interested the author. Some of the colophons were collected by Yovsep'eanc' and others are found in the different catalogues of collections of Armenian manuscripts.¹¹⁰ The inscriptions that interest us are inscriptions on stones and church walls which give official information about the one who constructed the Church, the date and other historical information.

2 - Arabic Sources

Arabic sources provide us with a certain amount of political, military, economic and administrative information about Armenia, but unfortunately they have nothing on the Church. For the Arab historian there was nothing which was worthy of recording outside Islam; hence, they were quite uninterested in the affairs of the Church so long as they did not present a threat to Arab hegemony. Therefore, the Arab sources are of secondary importance for the present research.

For our purpose Arabic sources could be divided into three categories: the Qur'ān, historical and legal sources. The first, the holy scripture of the Muslims, gives us the religious or theological basis of the manner in which the Arabs treated the *ahl al-Kitāb* (the 'People of the Book', i. e., Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians), who had submitted to the Arab rule and had become a protected people (*ahl al-dhimma*).¹¹¹

The historic sources are of various types: the earliest were biographies (*siyar*, sing. *sīrah*), histories of conquests (*maghāzī*), and genealogies and books

mas of the council of Manazkert where dyophysitism is clearly condemned, see Č'amč'ean, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'* (Venice, 1785), vol. II, pp. 576-587; Kogean; *Ekelec'i*, p. 266; V. Inglisian, "Chalkedon und die armenische Kirche", Grillmeier-Bacht, *Chalkedon*, vol. II, pp. 383-387.

¹¹⁰ G. Yovsep'ean, *Yišatakarank' Jeragrac'* (Antelias, 1951); Sarghissian, *Catalogue*; Dashian, *Catalog*; Mnac'akanyan, *et. al.*, *C'uc'ak Jeragrac' Maštoc'i Anvan Matenadarani*, 2 vols. (Erevan, 1965, 1970 ; A. Siwrmēean, *Mayr C'uc'ak Hayerēn Jeragrac' Erusalemi Srboc' Yakobean' Vank' i*, 4 vols. first volume (Venice, 1948); vols. II-IV by N. Bołarean (Jerusalem, 1953, 1954, 1969); Baronian-Conybeare, *Catalogue*.

¹¹¹ On the *Ahl al-Kitāb* and *Ahl al-Dhimma* see *infra*, pp. 112 sqq., 138 sq.

of classes (*ansāb wa- tabaqāt*). It is much later that we come across annals and chronicles. The main source of historical writing was the Tradition (*al-ḥadīth*) which passed orally from generation to generation until it was put down in writing. Each Tradition had two parts: the chain of authorities (*isnād* or *sanad*) and the text (*matn*).¹¹² Though the continuity of the chain and the reliability of every reporter decides the value of each tradition, yet one is well aware of what could happen to traditions, however conscientiously people might try to transmit them orally. A second disadvantage from which Arab historiography suffers is the fact that most of the texts are from the period after A. D. 750 and were often subjected to the ^cAbbāsīd policy of selection and suppression of evidence concerning the Umayyads, thus distorting the true picture of the Umayyad Caliphate.¹¹³

There are a number of Arab historians who speak about Armenia. One of the earliest is al-Balādhurī, a disciple of Ibn Sa^cd who died circa 279/892. He is one of the important historians because he has a critical attitude towards the sources he uses, for he gives the chain of witnesses to any event and tries to combine different traditions into a continuous narrative history. In his book *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān*, Balādhurī has a long chapter on the conquest of Armenia, in which besides the story of occupation he gives valuable information on the administration of the land, dealing with the question of taxation, Arabization of the coinage and the government machinery, and changes in Arab policy.¹¹⁴ Balādhurī has preserved the texts of the different treaties that the invading Arab armies concluded with the inhabitants of the various cities in Armenia. Al-Ya^cqūbī's history¹¹⁵ is another outstanding and accurate source on events in Caucasia and Armenia. He passed most of his youth in Armenia and gives details missing in Balādhurī; having lived in Armenia and being in contact with the local Arab settlers he may have had access to traditions that were unavailable to others. He died in 284/897. Al-Ya^cqūbī's work is also a good check for the account of al-Ṭabarī,¹¹⁶ whose history is the most comprehensive

¹¹² On Traditions see J. Robson, *Hadith*, EI², vol. III, pp. 23-28 and the bibliography.

¹¹³ T.W. Arnold, *The Caliphate* (London, 1965), p. 26.

¹¹⁴ Edited by M. J. De Goeje, *Liber Expugnationis Regionum* (Leiden, 1863-66); English trans. by P. K. Hitti and P. C. Murgotten, *The Origins of the Islamic State* (New York, 1916, 1924). See C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (Leiden, 1943), Erster Band, pp. 147 sq.; Erster Supplementband (Leiden, 1937), p. 216; C. H. Becker-F. Rosenthal, "Al-Balādhurī", EI², vol. I, pp. 971 sq.

¹¹⁵ Ya^cqūbī, *Tārīkh*, ed. M. Th. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1883). See also Brockelmann, *Litteratur*, vol. I, pp. 258 sqq.; supp. vol. I, p. 405.

¹¹⁶ Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa'l-Mulūk*, prepared by a number of great orientalists and edited by M. J. de Goeje in 3 vols. (Leiden, 1879-1901). See also Brockelmann, *Litteratur*, vol. I, pp. 148 sqq.; supp. vol. I, p. 217; and R. Paret, "Al-Ṭabarī" EI¹, vol. IV, pp. 578 sq.

and detailed work on the Caliphate in general. Though somewhat desultory, the importance of Ṭabarī's history is well attested. He died in 310/923. The information he gives about Armenia is markedly different than that of Balādhurī, probably because they had independent sources.

The legal sources, like the historical ones, are of a later period; nevertheless, they incorporate material coming from earlier times. These sources are also collections of traditions, legal precepts and records of incidents, loosely arranged, dealing in general with questions of land holding and taxation, the legal status of non-Muslims and apostasy. Ibn Ādam is regarded as a reliable compiler and transmitter of traditions. In his work *Kitāb al-Kharāj*¹¹⁷ he has collected many legal traditions with no personal comment. He saw the birth of the four Muslim Schools of Law but he stood above them and took no part in the legal controversies of his day.¹¹⁸ He died in 203/818. His contemporary, Abū Yūsuf,¹¹⁹ wrote a second treatise with the same title. He was a man of more forceful character, who not only collected the traditions but also commented on them. He addressed his book to Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, and in it he attempted to define the duties of a ruler in the light of the Qur'ān and his responsibilities towards his subjects. He is regarded to be one of the founders of the Ḥanafī School of Law and died in 182/798. Both Ibn Ādam and Abū Yūsuf lived at the time when the Islamic Caliphate had reached its zenith, so that it is open to question if they were reflecting old traditions or the practices of their own time. Abū Yūsuf's strong condemnation of the system of tax farming could be regarded as evidence that tax farming had become the accepted way of tax collection at this time.¹²⁰

Finally, Māwardī (d. circa 450/1058), wrote an important treatise on constitutional law, in which he tried to deal with legal questions on a purely theoretical basis.¹²¹ One of his sources was Qudāmah (d. 320/932)¹²² who summarized all the religious precepts dealing with taxation.

¹¹⁷ Ed. T. G. J. Juynboll (Leiden, 1896), part of it is translated with a valuable introduction by A. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation in Islam*, (Leiden, 1958), vol. I.

¹¹⁸ Brockelmann, *Litteratur*, vol. I, p. 192; see Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. I, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ *Kitāb al-Kharāj* (Cairo, 1302 and 1352). Fr. trans, E. Fagnan, *Le livre de l'impôt foncier* (Paris, 1921); Eng. trans. in part with an introduction by Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. III.

¹²⁰ Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. II, p. 15.

¹²¹ Fr. trans. L. Ostorrog, *Traité de droit public musulman*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1900, 1906), also by E. Fagnan, *Les statuts gouvernementaux* (Alger, 1915).

¹²² Qudāmah *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, ed. M. J. De Goeje, in BGA (Leiden, 1889) vol. VI, trans. in part by Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. II, pp. 21-68.

3 – Byzantine and Syriac Sources

The Christian sources – both Greek and Syriac – are of secondary importance for the present work. With few exceptions they come from a later period and tend to repeat one another.¹²³ The Syriac historians in general suffer from one major deficiency “they lived the separate life of a minority community, isolated from the courts of kings and princes,”¹²⁴ and like the Armenian and Byzantine sources are greatly biased against the Arabs. It must be emphasized, however, that they are indispensable for the study of the status of Christians under Islam, the degree of religious freedom they enjoyed and the question of taxation. Reading the Syriac sources one is struck at the helplessness of the Christian subjects and their utter dependence upon the goodwill of the individual local Arab official rather than upon any written law. In this respect it is interesting to see to what extent the evidence of Syriac historians is corroborated by Armenian sources. For the Syriac sources I shall be using Chabot’s translation of Michael the Syrian and Dionysius of Tell-Mahré,¹²⁵ while for the Byzantine sources De Boor’s edition of Theophanes and the translation of Constantine Porphyrogenitus by Jenkins.¹²⁶

4 – The Literature

We have an abundance of literature that in a general manner covers the period of Arab domination and touches upon administrative, political and military questions, but in these works the affairs of the Church are of peripheral interest.¹²⁷ The most comprehensive history of the Armenian Church, though a little dated, is Ormanean’s *Azgapatum*. Tournebize’s *Histoire politique et reli-*

¹²³ E. W. Brooks, “The sources of Theophanes and the Syriac chroniclers”, BZ, vol. XV (1906), pp. 578-587.

¹²⁴ J. B. Segal, “Syriac Chronicles as Source Material for the History of Islamic Peoples”, in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (London, 1962), p. 251.

¹²⁵ J. -B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, patriarche jacobite d’Antioche. (1166-1199), éditée pour la première fois et traduite en français, 4 vols. (Paris, 1899, 1901, 1905, 1910); *idem*, *Chronique de Denys de Tell-Mahré* (d. 845) (Paris, 1895).

¹²⁶ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. De Boor, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1883-1885). Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, Greek text ed. G. Moravcsik, English trans. R. J. H. Jenkins (Budapest, 1949).

¹²⁷ J. Laurent, *L’Arménie*; J. De Morgan, *Histoire du peuple arménien* (Paris, 1919); R. Grousset, *Histoire*; H. Pasdermajian, *Histoire de l’Arménie*, 2^{ème} ed. (Paris, 1964); and M. Ghazarian, *Armenien unter der arabischen Herrschaft* (Marburg, 1903), are disappointing and stand in need of revision in the light of recent discoveries. The most useful work on the Arab period is still the work of Prof. Manandyan, *K’nnakan Tesut’yun Hay Žołovrdi Patmut’yan*, vol. II, pt. ii (Erevan, 1960).

gieuse de l'Arménie is useful but like Ormanean's work is dated and strongly biased. Kogean's controversial book *Hayoc' Ekelec'in* is totally negative in approach; he has written it with the sole purpose of criticizing Ormanean and, therefore, is useful to consult as a check on the former's account. Mécérian's *Histoire et institutions de l'Église arménienne* is greatly disappointing; he has a short chapter on the Church under the Arabs but says nothing new.¹²⁸ The work of Prof. Garitte, already cited, is of major importance for the history of the Armenian Church to the end of the seventh century. For the relation of the Armenian Church with the Syrian and Imperial Churches the works of Ter Minassiantz¹²⁹ and Ter-Mikelian¹³⁰ are very valuable. However, we must emphasize the fact that all of the above-cited books have very little or nothing on the problem of Church-State relations.

For the study of feudalism in Armenia we have the three important works by Adontz, Manandyan, and Toumanoff. Adontz was the first to study seriously feudalism in ancient Armenia and attempted to settle the number, military potential and the size of the estates of the *naxarar* houses. He has a very useful chapter on "The *naxarar* System and the Church" where he discusses the hierarchical development of the Church and the gradual increase of the number of bishops, from the days of Gregory the Illuminator to the council of Manazkert In A. D. 726.¹³¹ Manandyan meticulously studies all that the ancient Armenian historians wrote about feudalism. He discusses the feudal social structure of Armenia during the Arsacid period and the Marzpanate. His main interest was in the internal feudal organization of the feudal houses. He also has a very valuable chapter on *Yekelec'akanneri Dasə Vorpes 'Azatac' Tohm* (The class of clergy as a clan of Azats),¹³² in which he discusses how the Church conformed to the feudal pattern of the land. But both of these books stop short of the Arab period. Toumanoff's work is the most recent and comprehensive work on the subject. He discusses the rise, development, inter-relation and rank of the feudal houses, giving lists of the dynasties of the pre-Arsacid, post-Arsacid and early Arab periods, but has nothing about the Church.¹³³

This short survey of the literature makes it abundantly clear that the question of Church-State relations in Armenia during the Arab domination has remained hitherto largely unexplored.

¹²⁸ (Beyrouth, 1965), pp. 79-92.

¹²⁹ *Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen.*

¹³⁰ *Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zur byzantinischen* (Leipzig, 1892).

¹³¹ *Armenia*, pp. 253-288.

¹³² *Feodalism*, pp. 126-147.

¹³³ *Studies.*

CHAPTER I

THE PERIOD OF CONQUEST AND THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

A – Byzantino-Armenian Relations To A. D. 650

The political influence of both Byzantium and Sassanian Persia was reflected in the religious policies they pursued in their respective parts of Armenia. Both of the dominating states interfered in the ecclesiastical life of the nation and tried to settle religious issues in a favourable manner to attain their own political objectives. This attitude produced a political and religious, and to a certain extent cultural, dichotomy in Armenia. Even after the Sassanian Empire had completely disappeared and the Byzantine State had lost its control over the land this polarity often reappeared with the Arab Caliphate taking the place of Sassanian Persia.

1 – Byzantine Religious Policy

There was an intimate relationship between the Church and the State in the Byzantine Empire; the two were allied in the fight against anything that disturbed the divinely ordained order of things. This interdependence, however, worked for the disadvantage of the Church, because the representatives of the spiritual authority became subordinate to the holders of temporal power.

The Emperor was not only the highest military commander, the supreme judge and the only legislator, but also the protector of the Church and of orthodoxy. He was chosen by God and he was therefore not only the lord and ruler but the living symbol of the Christian Empire which God had entrusted to him.¹

For this reason the Emperors were willing to go to the greatest lengths for the sake of a point of Christian dogma because they regarded themselves as the

¹ G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. J. Hussey (Oxford, 1968), p. 31.

divinely appointed guardians for the purity of the doctrine and the unity of the Church. They felt that the State could never be powerful so long as the Church was weakened by heresy and disunion. Hence, any deviation from the orthodox faith was also regarded as a rebellion against the State which led the Emperors to punish heretics and schismatics with the constant preoccupation of safeguarding the unity and integrity of the Empire; i. e., doctrinal disputes stopped being the concern of the Church only but became State affairs.²

The reign of Emperor Justinian I (527-565) can be regarded as the crystallization of this ideal. He was able to realize that which many of his predecessors had tried in vain.³ Justinian's view of Church-State relations is best expressed in the preface to Novel 6 of 16 March 535;

Among the greatest gifts of God bestowed by the kindness of heaven are the priesthood and the imperial dignity. Of these, the former serves things divine; the latter rules human affairs and cares for them. Both are derived from the one and the same source, and order human life. And, therefore, nothing is so much a care to the Emperors as the dignity of the priesthood; so that they may always pray to God for them. For if the one is in every respect blameless and filled with confidence toward God, and the other rightly and properly maintains in order the commonwealth intrusted to it, there is a certain excellent harmony which furnishes whatsoever is needful for the human race.⁴

To realize the religious unity and political integrity of the Empire there were a number of attempts of ecclesiastical union between the Armenian and Byzantine Churches during the second half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh centuries.

² For an extensive discussion of the role of the Emperor in religious affairs see C. Toumanoff, "Caesaropapism in Byzantium and Russia", TS, vol. VII (1946), pp. 212-232; *idem*, "Christian Caucasia between Byzantium and Iran", T, vol. X (1954), pp. 115-121. See also Ostrogorsky, *ibid*, pp. 31, 47, 71, 101; L. B. Moss, "The Formation of the East Roman Empire, 330-717", CMH, vol. IV, pt. i, pp. 10-22; L. Duchesne, *Early History of the Christian Church*, trans. C. Jenkins (London, 1912), vol. II, pp. 517-526; J. R. Palanque, "The Victory of the Church", *The Church in the Christian Roman Empire*, J. R. Palanque, *et. al.*, trans. E. C. Messenger (London, 1949-1952), vol. I, pp. 64-69; *idem*, "Catholicism as a State Religion", *ibid*, vol. II, pp. 691-716.

³ On the religious policy of Justinian see P. R. Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church*, a collection of legal documents to A. D. 535 (London, 1966), vol. III, pp. 987 sqq. and *passim*.; B. J. Kidd, *The Churches of Eastern Christendom* (London, 1927), pp. 55-75; J. Westbury-Jones, *Roman and Christian Imperialism* (London, 1939), pp. 230-249; L. Bréhier "La politique religieuse de Justinien", HE, vol. IV, pp. 437-466. E. Stein, *Histoire du bas-empire*, trans. by J. R. Palanque (Paris, 1949), vol. II, pp. 369-402.

⁴ Kidd, *ibid*, p. 60.

The first attempt at church union was in A. D. 572, when Vardan II Mamikonean and Catholicos Yovhannēs II Gabelean (557-574), accompanied by a number of bishops and *naxarars*, took refuge in Constantinople, after the abortive rebellion of the same year against Sassanian Persia. While in the capital they made a church union for political convenience which was of no lasting consequence.⁵ There was a second attempt after the partition of A. D. 591, when Emperor Maurice (582-602), failing to bring about the desired union, set up a rival Chalcedonian Catholicos on the Byzantine side of the frontier.⁶ Emperor Heraclius (610-641) thought it might be possible to accomplish what many Emperors before him had tried in vain, and unite all the heretics with the Orthodox Church by introducing a new and more elastic formula of the One-energy.⁷ Catholicos Ezr I Paražnakertc'i (630-640), upon the threats of Mžež Gnuni – the governor of Byzantine Armenia – accepted the council of Chalcedon and partook of the Holy Sacrament with the Emperor in Karin.⁸

⁵ On the rebellion of A. D. 572 and the subsequent church union see Sebēos, p. 26; Arsēn Catholicos, p. 42; Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 63 sq.; Asolik, pp. 84 sq.; Vardan, summarizing the letter of Photius, p. 84; Diegesis, §§ 77-92, in Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 37-39; and M. Č'amč'ean, vol. II, pp. 283 sq. The date is given by Garitte, *ibid*, p. 175; and H. Hambarean, "Hayastani K'alak'akan Vičakə Vahani Mahēn Minč'ew Vardan V-i Apstambut'iwnā", HA, vol. 26 (1912), col. 534, as 23 Feb. 572. E. Dulaurier, *Recherches sur la chronologie arménienne* (Paris, 1859), pp. 206 sq.; *idem*, *Histoire Universelle par Étienne Assogh'ig, de Daron* (Paris, 1883), pp. 116 sq., 189 n. 43; N. Akinean, "Dunoy 572-i Apstambut'iwnā" HA, vol. 27 (1913) cols. 79 sq., on 2 Feb 572. Ormanean, vol. I, col. 564 puts it on 23 Feb. 571. Manandyan, *History*, vol. II, pt. ii, p. 16, puts it on 22 Feb. 572. See also Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 267 sq.; Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 241-251, 292 sq.; Ter-Mikelian, *Kirche*, pp. 56 sq.; Ter-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 49 sqq.

⁶ Emperor Maurice (582-602) set up Yovhannēs Bagaranc'i (593-611) in Avan, a town on the Byzantine side of the river Azat opposite Dvin. Sebēos, pp. 52 sqq.; Arsēn Catholicos, pp. 42 sqq.; *Ananun Žamanakagriut'iwn*, ed. B. Sargisean (Venice, 1904), p. 76; Orbelean, pp. 72 sq.; Movsēs Kałankatuac'i, *Patmut'iwn Atuanic' Ašxarhi*, ed. M. Ėmin (Moscow, 1860), pp. 212 sq., trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 172; Asolik, p. 86; Vardan, p. 60; Uxtanēsi Episkoposi, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc' ew Bažanman Vrac'* (Vałaršapat, 1871), p. 63; M. Č'amč'ean, vol. II, pp. 295-300. For some literature see Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 389 sq.; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 225-254; K. Ter-Mkrtč'ean, *Knik' Hawatoy* (Ėjmiacin, 1914), p. lxxxviii; Ter-Mikelian, *Kirche*, pp. 58 sq.; G. Bardy, "Les églises de Perse et d'Arménie au VI^e siècle", HE, vol. IV, pp. 511 sq.

⁷ For an extensive discussion of the issue see Hefele-Leclercq, vol. III, Pt. i, pp. 317-432; L. Bréhier, "La nouvelle crise religieuse. Juifs, Monoénergisme, Islam (632-639)", HE, vol. V, pp. 111-124, 131-134.

⁸ On the church union at the time of Emperor Heraclius and Catholicos Ezr, see Sebēos, p. 101; Arsēn Catholicos, p. 44; Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 77-78; Orbelean, p. 83; Asolik, p. 87; BL, 221-222; Č'amč'ean, vol. II, pp. 328 sqq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 462-467; Yovsēpeanc', *Yišatakarakank'*, vol. I, pp. 33-36; Grousset, *Histoire*, p. 284; Ostrogorsky, *History*, pp. 105 sqq.; Ter-Mikelian, *Kirche*, pp. 61-62; Hefele-Leclercq, vol. III, pt. i, pp. 258 sqq. For an extensive study on the council of Karin of A. D. 633, its sources and literature see Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 278-311.

Finally, Emperor Constans II (641-668), a man of strong will and restless energy, walked in the same path as his grandfather Emperor Heraclius. He issued the famous edict known as *Typos* which was in reality an attempt to bury the whole doctrinal controversy in oblivion.⁹ The *Typos* again shows how the Emperor tried to make the Church subservient to the State using her for political ends, viz., to bring the outlying provinces into close communion with the centre so that the Empire might present a stronger front against the victorious Arabs. His unscrupulous zeal, however, plunged the Empire into catastrophic disarray. He had given up hope of recovering Egypt and Syria but he was not yet ready to write off Armenia from his balance sheet.

After the three years' truce was signed, Emperor Constans II was again free to devote his attention to the question of ecclesiastical unity. The Byzantine soldiers in western Armenia complained to the Emperor and Patriarch Paul II (641-653), saying that the Armenians would never partake of the Holy Sacrament with the Byzantines.

"We are regarded as impious in this land," they said, "for they reckon the council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo to be an affront to the divine Christ, and they anathematize them." Then the King, together with the Patriarch, decreed and wrote an edict to the Armenians in order that they should make a union of confession with Byzantium (*Horom*), to the end that they should not hold in contempt that Council and Tome.¹⁰

Emperor Constans even sent an erudite theologian of Armenian extraction from Bagawan, called Dawit'¹¹ to induce the Armenians to put an end to their antagonism. Sebēos continues, "the bishops and *naxarars* of Armenia assembled in Dvin before the Christ loving Catholicos Nersēs and the pious commander of Armenia T'ēodoros the lord of Rštunik". "They read the letter and listened to the arguments of Dawit' but did not agree "to change the veridical

⁹ *Typos*, the imperial edict issued by Emperor Constans II in 647-648 to replace Emperor Heraclius' *Ectheſis*; in an attempt to secure peace, it forbade all discussion of the doctrine of the wills. See Hefele-Leclercq, vol. III, pt. i, pp. 432-434; L. Bréhier, "Le démembrement des Chrétientés orientales et le schisme monothélite (641-668)", *HE*, vol. V, pp. 165 sqq.

¹⁰ Sebēos, p. 119.

¹¹ On Bagawan, see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 411. On Dawit' Bagawanc'i, see Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 483 sq.; Kogean, *Ekelec'i*, p. 24.8. On the date of the council, Sebēos, p. 142, puts it four years and Draxanakertc'i, p. 87, two years before the coming of Constans II to Dvin. The three years' truce ended in the summer of 652 (see, *infra*, p. 82 n. 56); then T'ēodoros Rštuni went to Damascus to make the peace treaty and returned during the twelfth year of Constaras II which should have been during the autumn of 652, then the march of the Emperor against Armenia was in the winter of 653. Therefore, the council should have been in A. D. 649.

teachings of Saint Gregory for the Tome of Leo.” The council there and then issued a letter of rejection.

After the introductory formulae the letter asserts that even the Sassanian Kings Kawad and Chosroes had not troubled the Armenians on account of their Christian faith; how much more a christian Emperor should have refrained from interfering in the manner of their worship and faith. The letter continues by quoting passages from the Gospels and the Epistles showing how the Holy Scriptures teach that “not only the Logos is the son of God but also the Logos and the body; and the body conjointly with the Logos; for though the body is mortal (human), however it is also God.”¹² It goes on to cite the testimony of the early apostolic fathers and the council of Nicea, affirming that the faith of the Armenian Church is the same as that taught by Saint Gregory the Illuminator, and held by the Churches of Caesarea and Rome according to the teachings of the first three Ecumenical Councils. The letter rejects the subsequent councils and quotes the Nicean creed calling it “the voice of the synodal council of Nicea”.¹³ The letter ends with a formal condemnation of the council of Chalcedon, reaffirming the one nature of Christ. It looks as though they never actually sent it, for Sebēos records the accusation of a member of the clergy against Catholicos Nersēs saying, “And that letter is now in his possession.”¹⁴ The letter is disorganized and repetitious; there are interpolations made by later hands. Abgaryan thinks the whole letter is a later addition and should not be regarded as genuine, since it is also missing in the Book of Letters.¹⁵ But the general content of the letter and its historical context, as also the fact that it was not sent, do not agree with Abgaryan’s conclusion.

2 – Byzantine Administrative, Fiscal and Military Policies

Armenian provinces passed under Roman suzerainty in different periods, and the imperial policies in these provinces was accordingly varied. Minor Armenia (*P’ok’r Hayk’*) – lands west of the Euphrates river – came under Roman domination very early and could not escape Romanization; the region was made into a Roman province during the second half of the first century

¹² Sebēos, p. 126.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 129.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 142.

¹⁵ Sebēos, pp. 120-134. For a discussion of the text and style of the letter see Abgaryan, *Sebeos*, pp. 186-191; Hübschmann, *Zur Gesch.*, p. 28; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 484 sq. For a further discussion on the council of A. D. 649 see *infra*, pp. 105 sq.

A. D. The Armenian historians have very little to say about Minor Armenia, probably because it had lost its Armenian character.¹⁶

After the partition of A. D. 387 a fifth of Armenia came under Roman control, including the autonomous principalities or satrapies of Greater Cop'k' (Sophanene), Angełtun (Ingilene), Anjit (Anzitenē), Šahuneac' Cop'k' (Sophenē), Hašteank' (Asthianenē) and Balahovit (Balabitenē), and the cantons of Inner Armenia – the Romans and Byzantines called it Greater Armenia.¹⁷ Toumanoff has rightly remarked:

All these states belonged to the category of *civitates foederatae*, that is, of autonomous polities which were bound to the Empire, not as a consequence of a conquest, but in virtue of an agreement or treaty – a *foedus non aequum* – and which thus owed their sovereign rights to no concession on the part of the protecting power.¹⁸

The satraps (*naxarars*) were minor kings in their own territories and were tied to the Emperor by being *foederati* – i.e., allies – though not as equals; similarly Inner Armenia was independent. Both the satrapies and Inner Armenia enjoyed complete administrative independence including executive, legislative and judicial autonomy, and had their own feudal militia. It meant that they did not have a Roman governor, nor did they pay taxes, and were free from all imperial garrison, but they were dependent upon the Emperor in foreign policy and in vassal military obligation.¹⁹ When the Kingdom in Byzantine Armenia was terminated, in 389/390 after the death of Aršak III, it did not bring about any particular change in the framework of legal relationships existing within the land; the King was replaced by a count who had only civil authority.²⁰ However, this situation did not last long, since Emperor Zeno (474-475, 476-491)

¹⁶ On Minor Armenia see *supra*, p. 6, n. 7.

¹⁷ On the partition of A. D. 387 see Łazar, chs. vi-viii, pp. 21-34; P'awstos, Bk. vi, ch. 1, pp. 261 sqq.; Movsēs Xorenac'i, Bk. iii, ch. 42, pp. 231 sq. On the literature see Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 7-24; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 151 sqq., n. 6; Stein, *Bas empire*, vol. I, pp. 205 sq., 528 n. 89; Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 163-166; Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 248, 253 sq.; Garitte, *Narratio*, p. 64; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 219-223; E. Honigsmann, *Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches* (Bruxelles, 1939), p. 9; J. Doise, "Le partage de l'Arménie sous Theodose 1^{er}", *REAnc*, vol. XLVII (1945), pp. 274-277; N. H. Baynes, "Rome and Armenia in the Fourth Century", *EHR*, vol. XXV (1910), pp. 625-643 (esp. pp. 642 sq.) The last three put the partition in A. D. 384.

¹⁸ Toumanoff, *ibid*, p. 133.

¹⁹ See Adontz, *op. cit.*, pp. 91 sqq.; Stein, *Bas empire*, vol. I, pp. 205-206, 528, n. 89; Toumanoff, *ibid*.

²⁰ On *Comes Armeniae* see Movses Xorenac'i, Bk. iii, ch. 46, p. 237; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 95 sqq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 152, 193 sqq.; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 222 sqq.; and the previous note.

changed the legal status of the satraps and imposed taxes in A. D. 488.²¹ Finally, the centralizing policy of Emperor Justinian I (527-565) was the decisive blow; he enacted a number of laws abolishing all the immunities and privileges of the Armenian *naxarars*. In A. D. 528, Justinian reorganized the military administration of the land, dismissed the *Comes Armeniae* and replaced him by a military governor with the title ‘Magister militum per Armeniam et Pontum Polemoniacum et gentes’, with his headquarters in Theodosiopolis,²² thus doing away with another of their privileges, viz., freedom from an imperial garrison and the right to have their own armed forces. To dismantle the peculiar socio-political structure of the principalities, the Emperor introduced a number of administrative reforms; he first reorganized the administrative divisions and formed the province of Fourth Armenia. Inner Armenia became Greater Armenia, which was subsequently called First Armenia, and this was followed by a new administrative division into four Armenias.²³ And finally the Emperor took special measures to destroy the very bases of the feudal system in Armenia and promulgated his famous decree, “Inheritance among the Armenians”,²⁴ which set out to do away with the traditional Armenian laws of agnatic inheritance and introduced the Roman law of cognatic inheritance. The centralizing policy of Emperor Justinian I did not leave the question of the fisc untouched. Though we find no direct enactments of imposition of imperial taxation – the facts are scanty and come exclusively from deductions made from general statements – yet the events in both parts of Byzantine Armenia – i.e., the satrapies and Inner Armenia – are parallel in what they reveal about the fiscal policy of Justinian. Procopius reports an interesting episode in which the princes of Inner Armenia complained to the Persian King, Chosroes I Anushirvan (531-579), concerning the interference of Emperor Justinian in their internal affairs, especially the introduction of taxation.²⁵ It seems that the position of the *naxarars* had greatly deteriorated, their rights and privileges had been limited, and that they were diametri-

²¹ See Adontz, *ibid*, p. 93; Toumanoff, *ibid*, p. 173.

²² Adontz, *ibid*, pp. 106-111; Toumanoff, *ibid*, p. 174; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 223-224; Stein, *Bas empire*, vol. II, pp. 289 sqq.

²³ Adontz, *ibid*, pp. 127-142; Toumanoff, *ibid*, p. 174 sq., 195 sq.; Stein, *ibid*, pp. 470 sqq.; Hübschmann, *ibid*, pp. 223 sqq.; J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* (London, 1923), vol. II, pp. 344 sq.; Hakobyan, *Ašxarhagrut’yun*, pp. 109 sq.

²⁴ For an exhaustive study of the laws of inheritance promulgated by Emperor Justinian I and their significance for Armenia, see Adontz, *ibid*, pp. 142-164; Toumanoff, *ibid*, pp. 174 sq.; and Manandyan, “Yustinianosi Novelnerō”, *History*, vol. II, pt. ii, pp. 125-140; see also Stein, *Bas empire*, vol. II, pp. 470 sqq.; Bury, *Lat. Rom. Emp.* vol. II, pp. 345; sqq.

²⁵ See Adontz, *ibid*, pp. 97 sq.; Toumanoff, *ibid*, pp. 194 sq. n. 212.

cally opposed to the imperial reform because it infringed upon their prerogative freedom from taxation, i.e., it broke the treaty they had with the Empire. They were, therefore, willing to submit to the vassalage of the Persian King.²⁶

The taxes that the Byzantine government levied from Armenia were not less burdensome than those of Sassanian Persia. It is very difficult to quote any figures because of the scanty information at our disposal. However, there can be no doubt that taxes were very high, for the formidable cost of defence was all the time draining the treasury. Continuous wars, repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and fortifications, the exorbitant cost of keeping a mercenary army with its supplies and equipment, the extremely expensive civil service and the expenses of the imperial court, all put a great strain on the treasury. Added to the above mentioned were the inefficiency and extortions of the officials of the fisc, all of which made taxation even more burdensome. John Lydus, a historian of the sixth century, remarks: "A foreign invasion seemed less formidable to the taxpayers than the arrival of the officials of the fisc."²⁷ One of the basic causes of Justinian's failure in both east and west was his fiscal policy.

The reforms imposed by Justinian were generally accepted in a hostile manner, and in particular the introduction of taxation produced great resentment both among the princes and the common people, resulting in bloody rebellions. Did these expressions of discontent produce any positive consequences? It seems not; the Emperor was determined to destroy the *naxarar* system. To check more up-risings and to tap the military potential of the Armenians Justinian took a further step; he dispersed the Armenians to different parts of the Empire and used them as soldiers.

The feelings of the Armenian people are best expressed by Procopius through the mouth of Arsaces rebuking Artabanus,

... though his fatherland was kept under strictest guard and exhausted by unwonted taxes, his father had been slain on the pretext of a treaty and covenant, and his whole family had been enslaved and was kept scattered to every corner of the Roman Empire.²⁸

²⁶ On taxation in the Byzantine Empire see A. Déléage, *La capitation du Bas-Empire* (Macon, 1945), *passim*.; F. W. Bussell, *The Roman Empire* (London, 1910), vol. II, pp. 355 sqq.; Stein, *Bas empire*, vol. I, pp. 220-224, vol. II, pp. 199-215, 441-449; P. Charanis, "On the Social Structure of the Later Roman Empire", B, vol. XVII (1944-1945), pp. 40-49; the two most important works on Byzantine taxation in Armenia are the books already mentioned by N. Adontz and C. Toumanoff.

²⁷ John Lydus, *De Magistratibus* (Bonn, 1837), p. 264, as trans. by Charanis, "Social Structure", p. 41, n. 6.

²⁸ Procopius, *History of the Wars*, Bk. VI (cont.) and VII, with an English trans. by H. B. Dewing, LCL (London, 1924), vol. IV, p. 423. See also Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 161.

Emperor 'Maurice (582-602) enforced even more energetically the policies of Justinian I, especially after the peace treaty of A. D. 591 when most of Armenia came under Byzantine domination. We have already touched upon his ecclesiastical policy, but the main cause of the discontent in Armenia was his military policy. To fight the increasing threat of the Slavs, Maurice used the Armenian feudal cavalry under their own feudal commanders. The Armenian cavalry under Smbat Bagratuni refused to go to Thrace. The Emperor's efforts to win them by gifts and honours was of no avail; an uprising started, they did not want to die in distant parts of the Empire for the glory of the Emperor. They realized the pointlessness of wasting their energy in the service of foreign interests when their own country was oppressed. The revolt was suppressed and appropriate steps were taken to check further revolts.²⁹ Maurice found the Armenians very troublesome; he sent a letter to the Persian King Chosroes II (590/1-628) accusing the Armenian *naxarars* of being the *casus belli*, a constant source of suspicion and disquiet between them. The Emperor conceived a plan and wrote to Chosroes saying that the Armenians

are a crooked and rebellious nation, they stand between us and cause trouble. But come, he said, I will gather mine together and send them to Thrace; and you gather yours together and order them to be transported to the East. For if they die, foes would have died, and if they kill, they kill our enemies and we shall live in peace. For if they should live in their land we (shall) have no repose³⁰.

This policy was disastrous for Armenia, depriving it of its leadership and military potential, and when the Arabs invaded, the Armenians had no means of putting up effective resistance.

The intolerant religious policy of the Emperors coupled with the unwonted burden of imperial taxation, the maladministration and exploitations of the lower officials, and the mass recruiting of Armenian soldiers for the dangerous trans-Danubian expeditions brought about among the Armenian *naxarars* and population a strong feeling of discontent, which in the final analysis drove the Armenians into the sphere of Arab influence. It is, however, debatable if the theological differences were so profound in the middle of the seventh century between the Armenian and Byzantine Churches. Probably theology was more of a political symbol with little doctrinal content, for during the period of the invasions the Church adopted a hostile attitude towards the Arabs and during the following fifty years pursued an ambivalent policy.

²⁹ Sebēos, pp. 53-54; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 393 sq. ; C. Toumanoff, "Armenia and Georgia", CMH, vol. IV, pt. i, p. 603; V. K. Iskanyan, "Mi Ēj Hay-Byuzandakan Haraberut'yunneri Patmut'yunic'", P-BH no. 4 (1960), pp. 148-160; Manandyan, *History*, vol. II, pt. ii, p. 17.

³⁰ Sebēos, p. 47.

B – The Early Invasions

1 – The First Arab Invasion

After the occupation of Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia, the Arabs needed to secure the control of the highlands in the north to have peace and security in the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers. For political, economic and strategic reasons they could not allow the Greeks to dominate this territory; hence, to wrest Armenia from the sphere of Byzantine influence a number of invasions were undertaken. Information on these early invasions is found in Armenian, Arab, Byzantine and Syrian historians, but their accounts are contradictory and their chronology conflicting. Despite the fact that many scholars have attempted to clear up the confusion, the question of the chronology and the number of the invasions has not yet been resolved in a satisfactory manner. The various views concerning the number and dates of the early Arab invasions have been reviewed by Prof. Hagop Manandyan.³¹ His achievement is impressive but leaves room for further discussion; his dating of the occupation of the fortress of Arcap' is debatable.

The Armenian and Arab historians agree on the direction from where and the route by which the Arab armies invaded Armenia. Sebēos³² says,

And a destructive army arose from the Asorestan region, through the way of Jor into the district of Taron. They occupied it and Bznunik and Aĥovit. And having taken the route of the valley of Berkri through Ordisp and Gagovit they poured into Ayrarat.³³

On the other hand Ibn al-Athīr³⁴ reports,

In the year 19 (2 Jan. 640-1 Jan. 641) ʿIyād marched on Amīd and beseiged it. The inhabitants resisted but then they made peace with him on terms like that of al-Ruhā'; then he occupied Mayyāfarqīn on terms like that of Amīd and Kafartūthā; then he went to Našībīn and its people fought against him, but made peace on terms similar to that of al-Ruhā'; and he occupied Ṭūr ʿAbdīn, Ḥiṣn Mārdīn, raided al-Mawṣil and occupied one of the two fortresses – some say that he did not reach it. The baṭrīq of al-Zawazān came to him and made a peace treaty. Then he marched

³¹ "Les invasions arabes en Arménie: Notes chronologiques," B, vol. XVIII (1948), pp. 163-195, trans. H. Berberian.

³² P. 108. Cf. Draxanakert'i, p. 82; Vardan, p. 67; Kirakos, p. 60.

³³ For the names and their geographical locations see H. Thopdschian, "Armenien vor und während der Araberzeit", ZAPh, vol. II (1904), pp. 61 sqq., n. 3.

³⁴ *Kitāb al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg (Leiden, 1867), vol. II, pp. 416 sq. Cf. Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 2505 sq.; Balādhurī, *Futūh*, p. 176; Yāqūt, *Kitāb Muʿjam al-Buldān*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866), vol. I, p. 206.

upon Arzan, occupied it, entered al-Darb, and crossing it towards Bidlīs reached Khilāt; and its baṭrīq made peace with him. He reached till ^cAyn al-Ḥāmiḍah in Armenia, then he returned to Raqqah.³⁵

The date of this first invasion is disputed. The Arabs could not have invaded Armenia for the first time either in 15/636³⁶ or in 18/639³⁷ because they were not yet masters of Syria and al-Jazīrah until the beginning of 19/640.³⁸ With Syria as a base the onward march of the Arab armies into Armenia, Ādhārbayjān and Georgia became possible.

The first occupation of Dvin, the capital of Persian Armenia, should be connected with this first invasion. The sources again disagree on the exact date, placing the incident between 19/640 and 26/646, as a result of which the scholars themselves are in discord. Our chief authority on the first occupation of Dvin is Sebēos, who possesses the value of a contemporary source. Though the Arab historians have valuable information on cultural issues and social conditions, financial and judicial problems, at this point they become a little confusing because they inadvertently run two incidents into one.³⁹

³⁵ For the names and their geographical locations see G. Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate* (Cambridge, 1905), *passim*.

³⁶ Yovhan Mamikonean, pp. 60 sq. says eight years after the death of Chosroes (590-628) at the hands of Heraclius, "Abdīrahim, the nephew of Mahmet came with a great multitude". Chosroes II was deposed on 25 February 628 and was put to death by the orders of his son four days later; see Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Leiden, 1879), pp. 357, n. 3, 382, n. 2, 431 sq.; Christensen, *Iran*, pp. 448, 492-496; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, pp. 325 sq. Movsēs Kaṭankatuac'i, p. 114, trans. C. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 90. Cf. Sebēos, pp. 95 sq. 628+8=A. D. 636.

³⁷ "Patmut'iwn Srboyn Nersisi ew Giwt Nšxarac'", SH (Venice, 1853), vol. VII, pp. 43 sq. says, "For Heraclius, the King of the Greeks, after the eightieth year of the Armenian calendar, went up to battle against Xosrov the Persian King and killed him; and eight years after this event, Abdīrahim the nephew of Mahmet, rose against Armenia with eighteen thousand men..." A. E. 80 is 22 June 630-21 June 631+8= June 638-June 639.

³⁸ The battle of Yarmūk took place in 15/636 where the Byzantine army suffered a disastrous set-back; see Balādhuri, pp. 135-138; Ṭabarī, vol. I, p. 2090 sq.; M. J. de Goeje, *Mémoire sur la conquête de la Syrie* (Leiden, 1900), pp. 103-136. Al-Jazīrah from where the first invasion into Armenia was staged, was occupied by ^cIyāḍ b. Ghanim between 17-19/638-640, see Balādhuri, p. 176; Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 2505 sqq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. II, pp. 414 sqq.; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 172; cf. Kh. al-Zirikli, *al-Ā^clām* (Beirut, 1969), vol. V, p. 282; C. Brockelmann, *History of the Islamic People*, trans. J. Carmichael and M. Perlmann (London, 1949), p. 56; and Lebeau, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, N. E. par M. de Saint-Martin (Paris, 1830), vol. XI, pp. 268 sqq.

³⁹ It seems to me that Balādhuri has put the events that happened during the second occupation of Dvin and later, in the story of the first, such as the occupation of Qāliqālā (Arm. Karin, Greek Theodosiopolis, present day Erzerum), the peaceful surrender of Dvin, the battle between Ḥabīb and the Byzantine general Maurianos, all of which Sebēos also records but at a later date.

Sebēos records that the Arabs came from Asorestan (al-Jazīrah) via Jor into Taron, passed through Bznunik' and Aliovit, and taking the road through the valley of Berkri over Ordisp and Gogovit, poured into Ayrarat and occupied Dvin "on Friday, 20th day of the month of Trē... in the years of Catholicos Ezr".⁴⁰ The crux of the matter is to find, by means of chronological calculations, in which year does the 20th of Trē fall on a Friday? E. Dulaurier, after elaborate chronological calculations, came to the conclusion that it falls on Friday, 6 October 642.⁴¹ It seems that Dulaurier has miscalculated, for 6 October 642 is a Sunday. L. Ališan, P. Hambarian and H. Manandyan have found out that 20 Trē falls on Friday, 6 October 640.⁴²

We could, therefore, conclude with some degree of certainty that the first Arab invasion of Armenia started in the spring of 19/640, lasted throughout the summer, culminated in the capture of Dvin in the fall during the vintage season – 6 October 640 – after which the invaders returned to Syria laden with much booty and innumerable slaves.⁴³

The capture of Dvin was closely linked and instrumental in the death of Catholicos Ezr. These two events set the stage for the two great personalities – Catholicos Nersēs III Dayec'i (641-661/2), surnamed Šinoł (Builder), and T'ēodoros the lord of Řštunik' – both of whom played the leading roles in the affairs of Church and State during the forties and fifties of the seventh century.

2 – The Second Arab Invasion

The second Arab invasion was from Persia, most probably after the famous battle of Nihawend (22/642-643)⁴⁴ when the fate of the Sassanian Empire

⁴⁰ Sebēos, p. 109.

⁴¹ *Recherches*, pp. 227-231.

⁴² Č'amč'ean, vol. II, p. 343, puts it in 6 January 640. Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, p. 334, says Dvin was besieged on 28 November 639 and occupied 6 January 640. Ormanean, vol. I, col. 474, says the Arabs besieged the city on 6 October 640 and occupied it on 6 January 641. Ališan, *Ayrarat*, pp. 407, 495; H. Hambarean, "Hayk' Arabac'woc' İřxanut'ean Tak", Huschardzan (Wien, 1911), p. 244 put it on 6 October 640. Dulaurier, *Recherches*, pp. 227 sqq.; A. Müller, *Der Islam im Morgen und Abendland* (Berlin, 1885), vol. I, p. 260, on 6 October 642. Thopdschian, "Armenien", pp. 62-67, in 642. Ghazarian, *Armenien*, p. 28, in 642-643; J. Laurent, *L'Arménie*, p. 90, n. 1, and p. 180, n. 1, sometimes in 645-646. Manandyan, "Invasion", pp. 167-177, on 6 October 640.

⁴³ Sebēos, p. 109; Lewond, p. 9; Asolik, pp. 98, 120; Drasxanakerc'i, p. 82; and Vardan, p. 67, all say 35,000 people were made captive. Kirakos, pp. 60 sq.; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 80; Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē, p. 6, say more than 12,000 people were massacred.

⁴⁴ Sebēos, p. 112; see Christensen, *Iran*, p. 506; Nöldeke, *Geschichte*, p. 434, and Brockelmann, *History*, pp. 58 sq., place the battle in 642. Müller, vol. I, p. 221, puts it in 22/643; Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, p. 315, n. 1 puts it in 21/641-642.

was sealed and the Arab armies had reached the southern shores of the Caspian sea.⁴⁵ The route they took was through Ādhārbayjān (Atrpakan),⁴⁶ fording the river Arax near Julfa (Jūla) and across Gołtn. They split into three groups; one group headed towards Ayrarat, a second marched upon the region of the Sep'hakan Gund⁴⁷ and a third group entered Albania. During this invasion a number of important events happened that shaped the political outlook of T'ēodoros Ėštuni and many of the other naxarars. After the tragedy of the first invasion Ėštuni's main concern was the defence of the land; he therefore informed the Byzantine general Procopius – who was staying with his armies in Byzantine Armenia – about the movements of the Arabs. The haughty and inactive attitude of the general disturbed him, he was disillusioned, for he saw what lay ahead for Armenia.⁴⁸

There was a number of encounters between the Arab armies and the Armenian feudal militia, with varying results. After parting from Procopius, Ėštuni laid an ambush against the marauding Arab forces at a place called El bark' Sarak,⁴⁹ where he won a minor victory. Instead of returning to join forces with Procopius he went to Garni.⁵⁰ Procopius, encouraged by the initial success of the Armenians, entered the conflict but suffered a terrible defeat at the hands

⁴⁵ On the date of the second invasion: Lewond, p. 8 says it took place “in the 26th year of their rule” (H. 26/ 646-647); on the following page, he puts it in the second year of Constans II (Aug. 642-Aug. 643); Sebēos also puts it during the second year of Constans II. Dionysius of Tell-Maḥré, pp. 6 sq. puts in 955/643-644. Ṭabarī, vol. I, p. 2666; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 180; Ibn al-Aṭḥīr, vol. III, pp. 21 sq. date it in 22/30 Nov. 642-19 Nov. 643. M. Smbatean, *Telekagir Getarkuni Covazard Gawari* (Vaḥaršapat, 1895), p. 5, says it was in 642. Hambarean, pp. 245; Ghazarian, p. 18; Tournebize, p. 354; Zaurent, p. 90, n. 1; and Manandyan, “Invasion”, pp. 177-183, all put it in 643. The most probable date is A. D. 643.

⁴⁶ Atrpatakan, Atropatenē, Ādhārbayjān; see Marquart, *Ėrānšahr*, pp. 108-114; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, pp. 23 sq.

⁴⁷ Sep'hakan Gund, N. Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 249 sq., 259, 322, 492 n. 57, thinks is the same as Mardastan and Mardpetakan; see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 343 sq.; H. Manandyan, *Hayastani Glxavor Čanaparhnerə əst Pevtingeryan K'artezi* (Erevan, 1936), p. 145; Ališan, Ayrarat, p. 420.

⁴⁸ Lewond, pp. 7 sq.

⁴⁹ Elbark' Sarak – Sarak from 'Sar' – Mountain – with the diminutive suffix 'ak', hence a hill. Elbark - brothers, sing. Elbayr. It is a hill near Bazujor and Marduc'ayk in the canton of Gogovit. See Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 370, 423; Manandyan, *Čanaparhner*, p. 151; Ališan, Ayrarat, p. 495; L. Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn Hin Hayastaneayc'* (Venice, 1822), pp. 446 sq.

⁵⁰ Garni is a canton in the province of Vaspurakan, located south of Gogovit and north-east of Lake Van. See Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 342; Inčičean, *ibid*, pp. 162, n. 2, 446.

of the Arabs near Marduc'ayk,⁵¹ for which he blamed Rštuni.⁵² The Arab armies were also victorious in the region of the Sep'hakan Gund, Tayk', Iberia and Albania. However, they were unable to capture the fortresses of Erewan, Ordisp and Naxčawan; they did occupy Xram and Arcap' but were forced to abandon the latter because of a strong Armenian counter-offensive.⁵³

Most modern scholars, depending on Dulaurier's chronological calculations, agree that the occupation of the fortress of Arcap' was on a Sunday, 23 Hori, during the second year of Constans II (Sunday, 10 August 643).⁵⁴ Manandyan, however, argues to the contrary that it was occupied on a Sunday, 8 August 650. His main argument runs as follows: the chronology of Sebēos on which Dulaurier bases his dating is an accidental coincidence; the historic events recorded by Sebēos before the occupation of Arcap' took place during the second, fifth and later years of Constans II, e.g., the treachery of Valentine, return of Varaztiroc' from exile, the trial and acquittal of T'ēodoros Rštuni; Lewond's statement that the capture of Arcap' was ten years after the first occupation of Dvin is correct; finally the occupation of Arcap' was before the three years truce between the Arabs and Byzantium signed in A. D. 650. To substantiate his argument Manandyan proposes two emendations to Sebēos' text.⁵⁵ I suppose to reject the entire chronology of a historian as false or accidental-coincidence may be warranted, but what can one say to the historical method that pronounces certain dates as right and others wrong chronologically without establishing a valid reason? The most important question for us is to find the exact date when the three years' truce was signed. We read in Sebēos that the

⁵¹ Marduc'ayk' – Lewond, p. 7; Sebēos, p. 138, uses the form Mardoc'ēsñ, a locality in Gogovit west of Artaz, near Bazujor, close to the borders of Vaspurakan and Ayrarat, see Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 495; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 423; Manandyan, *Čanaparhner*, p. 143; S. Melik' - Baxšyan, "Ditołut'yunner", P-BH (1964) no. 3, p. 84; Ghazarian, p. 19; Inčičean, *ibid*, p. 446. Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 492, n. 56 says it should be identified with Mardastan; *supra*, p. 79, n. 47.

⁵² Sebēos, p. 138.

⁵³ Sebēos, pp. 117 sq.

⁵⁴ On the date of the occupation of Arcap' Sebēos, p. 117, says, "and it came to pass during the second year of Kostandin (Constans II), in the month of Hori, twenty-third day of the month, on a Sunday..." while Lewond, p. 11, puts the event in the 36th year of their rule; Asolik, p. 122, repeats what Lewond says. Dulaurier, *Recherches*, pp. 231 sq.; Grousset, p. 299; Hambarean, p. 245; Melik-Baxšyan, "Ditołut'yunner", p. 89; Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 440, all put the occupation on a Sunday, 10 August-643. Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 509, on August 11. Manandyan, "Invasion", pp. 183-190, on Sunday, 8 August 650. Leo, *History*, vol. II, p. 307, in 651.

⁵⁵ "Invasion", pp. 183-190 in place of "second year" (բ) he proposes to read "in the eighth year" (ը) or "The ninth year" (թ), and emends the "twenty-third day" (իդ) to read the "twenty-fourth day" (իդ).

end of the three years' truce coincided with the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth year of Constans II (August, 652),⁵⁶ and the death of the Persian King Yazdkart III in his twentieth year (651-652).⁵⁷ It would mean that the truce ended some time in the summer of A. D. 652, and three years before that is summer 649;⁵⁸ therefore, there could not have been either an Arab invasion or the occupation of Arcap' in August 650. It seems to me more coherent to conclude that the Arabs occupied Arcap' during their second invasion, but gave it up when T'ēodoros Rštuni came upon them unexpectedly. The Arabs again returned with booty and slaves.

Probably there were a number of insignificant *razzias* during the following two years (23/644-24/645) from Ādhārbayjān.⁵⁹ According to the Arab historians and geographers, the invasion that brought Armenia under effective Arab control was at the beginning of ʿUthmān's Caliphate, while Muḥāwiya was the governor of Syria around 25/645-646. Muḥāwiya sent Ḥabīb b. Maslamah al-Fihri to Armenia who occupied Qālīqalā, Khilāt and Dabīl.⁶⁰ But even this was not of a lasting nature because the Arabs yet again returned to

⁵⁶ G. Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 112; Lebeau-St. Martin vol. XI, p. 283; H. Gelzer, "Abriss der byzantinischen Kaisergeschichte", in K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Literatur* (Munich, 1897), p. 951, put the death of Emperor Heraclius on 11 February 641. E. de Muralt, *Essai de chronographie byzantine* (St. Petersburg, 1855), vol. I, p. 292, on 11 March 641. He was succeeded by his two eldest sons Constantine III and Heraclonas; the former died on 25 May 641 leaving Heraclonas and his step-mother Martina in authority. Heraclonas was on the throne for six months and was succeeded by Constans II, son of Constantine III. The crux of the matter is, does the six months include the three months of co-caesarship? Ostrogorsky and Gelzer think it does not and put the succession in November 641. It seems to me it may have been included because the decisive factor in the overthrow of Heraclonas was the anxiety of the inhabitants of the capital, many of whom had vineyards and orchards on the Asiatic shores and were afraid that the soldiers of Valentine could spoil their harvest, for the vintage season was poor. The vintage season extends to October; therefore, the change should have taken place in August. Also Patriarch Pyrrhus was implicated in the revolution and banished to Africa, and was succeeded on the patriarchal throne by Paul II on 1 October 641, see J. Tixeront, *Histoire des dogmes dans l'antiquité chrétienne* (Paris, 1912), vol. III, pp. 178-179. Therefore, the end of Constans' eleventh year would be August 652.

⁵⁷ Yazdkart III died in A. D. 651/52; see Nöldeke, *Geschichte*, p. 434; Christensen, *Iran*, p. 508; J. Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse* (Paris, 1904), p. 245, n. 3; P. Peeters, "ΠΑΣΑΓΝΑΘΗΣ – ΠΕΡΣΟΓΕΝΗΣ", B., vol. 8 (1933), p. 411.

⁵⁸ Peeters, *ibid*, pp. 416-418.

⁵⁹ Such a raid was that of Salmān b. Rabiʿah from Ādhārbayjān in 25/645-646; see Balādhurī, p. 198; Ṭabarī, vol. I, p. 2806; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 180.

⁶⁰ Balādhurī, pp. 198 sqq.; Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 2804 sqq.; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 194; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. III, pp. 64 sqq.

Syria laden with booty and captives. However, soon the scene changed, in 27/647-648 Mu^cāwiya invaded Asia Minor, occupied Cappadocia and took Caesarea; from there he marched on Phrygia, and though unable to capture Amorium, he plundered the wealthy provinces and returned to Damascus with valuable booty and many prisoners;⁶¹ then followed the invasion of the island of Cyprus in 28/648-649⁶² which precipitated the three years' truce, and Armenia had a short respite. It was of no avail for the Emperor to buy a truce, for during these three years the Arabs were free to make themselves complete masters of Persia; moreover, Mu^cāwiya made further additions to his fleet, and when the truce expired he was fully prepared to renew his operations with increased strength against Byzantium and Armenia, both on land and sea.

From what we have said till now, we could conclude that the early Arab invasions were exploratory and plundering in nature. They wanted to assess the position and capability of the Armenians. While these raids were devastating the land T'ēodoros Āštuni realized that he had to deal with a new and formidable adversary, and he had to depend solely on his own means for the defence of the land. The Byzantine Empire was in no position to give military assistance of any sort, already two of the most important imperial provinces – Egypt and Syria – had fallen under Arab control, and the mighty Sassanian Empire lay prostrate beneath the hoofs of the Arab cavalymen. The whole balance of power had changed and there was urgent need for new political readjustment.

C – Period of Cooperation between the Catholicos and the Sparapet

With the collapse of Sassanian Persia Armenia became part of the Byzantine Empire. Internally the country was in a chaotic state; there was rivalry between Mžēž Gnuni and Dawit' Saharuni,⁶³ the *naxarars* were disunited and were unprepared to stand against, Arab attacks. Only T'ēodoros Āštuni tried to

⁶¹ Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography*, trans. E. A. W. Budge (Oxford, 1932), pp. 97 sq.; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, p. 85; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 441; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 116; Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, pp. 340 sq.

⁶² The first expedition sent by Mu^cāwiya against Cyprus was in 28/648-649, when the Arabs sacked Salamis-Constantia the capital. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, pp. 343 sq. says it was in 6140/647-8; Dionysius of Tell-Maḥré, p. 7, and Bar Hebraeus, p. 98 put the occupation in 960/648-649. Agapius of Menbidj, *Kitāb al-^cUnwān*, PO, vol. VIII, p. 455 puts it in the 6th year of Constans II (647), and on p. 480 in the 3rd year of ^cUthman (A. D. 647). See, also Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 441 sq.; Muralt, *Essai*, vol. I, p. 297; Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, pp. 338 sq.; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 116.

⁶³ Sebēos, p. 103.

resist the enemy but had no significant success.⁶⁴ The Arabs gave no respite to the Armenians to reorganize and strengthen the defences of the land; as Lewond puts it, like a swift flying dragon they penetrated into the heart of Armenia and occupied its capital Dvin. He further provides interesting details, for it shows a tendency to use terrorism:

Now who indeed shall mourn fittingly the terrible misfortunes? For the danger was intolerable from all sides; holy churches wherein the heathens were forbidden to enter, were utterly demolished and were trampled under the unclean feet of the impious. Priests along with deacons and ministers (of the altar) were massacred by the sword of the insolent and ruthless enemies... For they did not know which to mourn more, those who were massacred by the wicked sword, or those who were separated alive (i.e., taken captive), sons and daughters, to be alienated from the faith which is in Christ and spiritual divine glorification.⁶⁵

They killed more than “12,000 men in the holy martyrium of Saint Sargis; the sacred table and the font were covered with the blood of the killed”.⁶⁶

The grief caused by the great number of those killed and made captive was multiplied by the sudden death of Catholicos Ezr from the shock of the carnage. Even before the dead were properly buried and the people recovered from its shock, in the same year (AE 89/640-641),

T’ēodoros the lord of Rštunik’ and the other *naxarars* of Armenia prepared to set upon the patriarchal throne, in place of Ezr, Nersēs the bishop of Tayk’. But he was stupefied because of the excessive number of those massacred, who were among the captives of the city. He thought of fleeing secretly, as being incapable of holding such a great degree of political responsibility. But then, in consequence of the persuasive words and entreaty of the *naxarars*, he submitted and was confirmed. And having sat upon the patriarchal throne, he gathered and interred the multitude of the fallen and on the same spot he rebuilt the burned martyrium of the great martyr Sargis.⁶⁷

Catholicos Nersēs was from the province of Tayk’, the village of Išxan.⁶⁸ He was brought up and educated in Byzantine territory, a man of great learning and well acquainted with Greek language and literature. He had served for a while in the Byzantine army and as an officer had been to many parts of the Empire. But soon he settled in his native province and became its bishop, from

⁶⁴ Sebēos, p. 109; cf. Drasxanakerc’i, p. 82.

⁶⁵ Lewond, pp. 9 sq.

⁶⁶ Samuēl Anec’i, p. 80; *supra*, p. 78, n. 43.

⁶⁷ Drasxanakerc’i, p. 83.

⁶⁸ Išxan, a village in Tayk’, see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 431; Inčičean, Storagrut’iwn, p. 373.

where he was called to the office of Catholicos.⁶⁹ With his learning and military background he was the right man to occupy the supreme position in the Church, but we see that he was hesitant. Nersēs realized the seriousness of the situation: on the one hand, the *naxarars* were jealous and disunited, the political atmosphere was charged with tensions and rivalries, he had to mediate between the feuding parties; and on the other, the Arabs were devastating the land and plundering the country, while the Byzantine Empire was in no position to help. No wonder Nersēs thought he could not possibly occupy an office which carried such a great degree of political responsibility. Upon the insistence of T'ēodoros, joined by the *naxarars* and bishops, he submitted to the will of the electorate. Thus the close cooperation between the Catholicos and T'ēodoros started right from the beginning.

This was not the first time that T'ēodoros Rštuni took the initiative to place someone of his own liking upon the patriarchal throne. Sebēos, describing the election of Catholicos K'ristap'or II Apahuni (628-630), says, "Then by the proposition of T'ēodoros the lord of Rštunik', they elected a certain monastic of the Abrahamean house called K'ristap'or."⁷⁰

Upon taking the office, Catholicos Nersēs did not neglect his duties: immediately he gathered all those killed by the Arabs and buried them in the burned martyrion of Saint Sargis which he also rebuilt. He then supported T'ēodoros both morally and materially in the struggle against the Arabs, and kept the Byzantine government informed on all developments. It was through his intercession that Emperor Constans II officially appointed T'ēodoros commander of the feudal Armenian forces with the rank of a Patrician.⁷¹ This was a political maneuver, the Emperor giving a *de jure* recognition to what was *de facto* the case, with the ulterior motive of putting the defence of Armenia in the hands of Procopius and T'ēodoros Rštuni.

Soon T'ēodoros was the victim of an intrigue: the Emperor sent to Armenia a certain prince called T'uma (Thomas) who treacherously put T'ēodoros in fetters and dispatched him to Constantinople for trial.⁷² During the absence of T'ēodoros, Catholicos Nersēs was in command of the situation in Armenia. It was during this interlude that Aspet Varaztiroc' Bagratuni, the son of Xosrov

⁶⁹ Sebēos, pp. 140 sq.; Arsēn Catholicos, p. 46; Drasxanakerc'i, pp. 83-84; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 83; *ibid.*, "Šaric' Hayrapetac'n Hayoc' Yaytararut'iwn Eraneloyñ Yovhanisi Kat'oġikosi Hayoc'", p. 275; Vardan, pp. 67-70; Asoġik, p. 98 sq.; Č'amč'ean, vol. II, pp. 343-360.

⁷⁰ Sebēos, pp. 97 sq. See also B. L., p. 222; Drasxanakerc'i, p. 75; Asoġik, p. 87; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 271; Orbelean, p. 83; Kirakos, p. 54.

⁷¹ Sebēos, p. 109; Drasxanakerc'i, p. 84.

⁷² Sebēos, pp. 114 sq.

Šumn, who had returned from exile and was living in Constantinople, fled secretly to Tayk'. It was again Catholicos Nersēs who mediated between the Byzantine general T'ēodoros – not to be confused with Rštuni who was still in Constantinople – and Varaztiroc', taking from the latter a written oath of allegiance to the Emperor.⁷³ The Emperor then made Varaztiroc' a Kuropalate and appointed him prince of Armenia. But he died before taking office and was succeeded by his son Smbat. T'ēodoros, on the other hand, was acquitted and reinstated in his honours, but some of the Armenian *naxarars* were not pleased with what the Emperor had done, for Sebēos says, "And he (i.e., the Emperor) gave him the same dignity of generalship, whether the Armenian princes were pleased with it or not."⁷⁴ The undercurrents that divided the Armenian *naxarars* came to the surface: clearly some of the *naxarars* were opposed to T'ēodoros, but the cooperation between Nersēs and T'ēodoros continued. All these events presumably happened between the first and second Arab invasions.

A second expression of this cooperation was the condemnation of Yovhan Mayragomec'i.⁷⁵ There are two groups of witnesses about him; the first group is composed of three Chalcedonian authors – the *Diegesis*, the work of Arsēn Catholicos of Georgia, and the letter of Photius. Opposed to these are the Armenian national historians who are mainly anti-Chalcedonian and have very little on Mayragomec'i – Sebēos, Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i and Asoġik followed by other historians. Obviously the two have independent sources. The Chalcedonian sources present Mayragomec'i as a conceited and ambitious priest aspiring to become Catholicos and having failed three times – after Komitas I (615-628), Ezr I (630-641), and Nersēs III (641-662) were elected to the office. He carried out an anti-Chalcedonian campaign against Nersēs and the other high clergy who cooperated with him. The Catholicos with the help of T'ēodoros branded Yovhan's forehead and two of his followers with the fox-sign because of their heresy, and exiled them to the Caucasian mountains.⁷⁶

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 115 sq.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁷⁵ On Yovhan Mayragomec'i see Ter Mkrtč'ean, *Knik*, pp. lxxxix-xcv; on his doctrinal writings *ibid.*, pp. 52-55, 142-146, 253-256, 287, 327-330, 363 sq.; Arsēn Catholicos, pp. 45-46; *Drasxanakertc'i*, pp. 77-79; Asoġik, pp. 87 sqq.; Vardan, pp. 62, 85; Kaġankatuac'i, pp. 211-213, 216, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 171-173, 175; Kirakos, pp. 54-56; Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 319-350; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 469. Yovsep'ean, *Yiřatakarakank'*, pp. 35 sqq. has the colophon of a 13th c. manuscript Ms. Jerusalem 1272), written by a scribe called Basil (Barsel), which records that Yovhan and his disciples were thrown in goal and were persecuted by Catholicos Nersēs III.

⁷⁶ The infamous punishment of branding the forehead of heretics with the fox-sign is found in the 19th canon of the council of řahapivan (A. D. 444/5), see Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I,

Opposed to the above statement is the testimony of the Armenian national historians, who present Yovhan Mayragomec'i as an erudite theologian and philosopher, the guardian of the church of Saint Grigor in Dvin, responsible for the day to day running of the patriarchate, and the champion of orthodoxy at a time when many high ranking clergymen were willing to compromise their faith for material gain. He opposed strongly the confessional union at the time of Emperor Heraclius and Catholicos Ezr on account of which he suffered great persecution at the hands of the Catholicos, so much so that he was forced to leave his office and retire to his monastery of Mayroy Vank'.⁷⁷ But even there he had no rest from the pressures of Ezr and took refuge in the canton of Gardman⁷⁸ where he lived a holy and virtuous life.

Drasxanakerc'i seems to be aware of the two traditions for he says that Mayragomec'i was regarded by some as a schismatic and by others as a holy man.⁷⁹ In the light of the complete silence of Sebēos, the neutral attitude of Drasxanakerc'i, and the allusion of Vardan to the letter of Patriarch Photius, it appears as though the Armenian historians were aware of the Chalcedonian tradition concerning Mayragomec'i, but have disregarded it. We could, therefore, accept with some degree of certainty the tradition preserved by the *Diegesis* – also recorded by Arsēn Catholicos and the letter of Photius – as evidence of the cooperation between Catholicos Nersēs III Šinoł and T'ēodoros Ǧštuni in condemning and expelling Yovhan Mayragomec'i.

A third expression of the cooperation between Church and State could be seen in the extensive building activity that the Catholicos undertook during the forties and fifties of the seventh century. It would have been impossible to carry on a building activity on such a scale without the direct involvement and positive cooperation of the feudal lords and especially the encouragement of the presiding prince. After the second major Arab incursion into Armenia in A. D. 643 – despite a number of insignificant razzias during the following years –

pp. 461 sq.; it says, "If anyone should be found in *Mclnēut'iwn* (Messalianism), an elder (priest), or a deacon, or from among monastics, his priesthood should be dissolved, his forehead branded with a fox-sign and he should be delivered unto repentance in hermitages." In the tenth century the Paulicians were punished in the same manner. Though Ter Mkrtč'ean, *Knik'*, p. xcvi does not think Mayragomec'i was branded with a fox-sign, it could well be that he was subjected to the same-punishment. See H. Jordan, *Irenaeusfragmente*, pp. 118 sq.; Arsēn Catholicos, p. 46; and Garitte, *Narratio*, text §§ 137-141, pp. 45 sq.; commentary, pp. 337-343. Cf. Vardan, p. 85.

⁷⁷ On Mayroy Vank' or Mayroc' Vank, see Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 453; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 365, 449; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 270.

⁷⁸ On Gardman see Inčičean, *ibid*, pp. 338-339; Ėp'rikean, *Patkerazard Bnašxarhik Baṛaran* (Venice, 1903-5), vol. I, p. 497; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 352.

⁷⁹ Drasxanakerc'i, p. 79.

Armenia had a relatively peaceful period of ten years, till the end of the three years' truce in A. D. 653. Drasxanakertc'i reports,

Trusting in the Lord and disregarding the instructive incursions of the marauding bands of the enemy, with a fitting zeal, he laid the foundation of the great and wonderfully splendid house of God bearing the name of saint Gregory... and our land was sheltered for a short while from the evil Hagarite marauders.⁸⁰

It falls beyond the scope of the present thesis to discuss the various types of ornamentation which the churches built by Nersēs III display, the building material they use and the architectural style they reflect. We are only interested in them in so far as they indicate the cooperation between the Church and State. First of all Nersēs rebuilt the burned martyrium of Saint Sargis where he also interred the multitude of the fallen during the first Arab occupation of Dvin, on 6 October 640.⁸¹ Because of the scanty information at our disposal it is difficult to know the style and size of the church; the date of the construction should be between the first and second Arab invasion A. D. 640-643. Then Nersēs built the church of Xor Virap. Drasxanakertc'i says,

Then he built a holy church over the pit of saint Gregory, where, buried among the venomous creatures, the apostolic man of God bruised the head of the sinuous dragon, elevating Armenia... into the glorious light of the son of God.⁸²

Urhayec'i records that patriarch Nersēs also built the monastery of Joroy in Tosp, a canton of Vaspurakan, east of Lake Van; T'ovma Arcruni, however says it was built by Saint Gregory the Illuminator.⁸³

What immortalized the name of Nersēs III as "Builder" (Šinoł) is the Zuart'noc' complex.⁸⁴ All of the Armenian historians use superlatives to describe the cathedral. Sebēos says,

At that time Catholicos Nersēs of Armenia made plans to build for himself a dwelling place near the holy churches that were in the city of Vałaršapat [now Ējmiacin],

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.83... 85.

⁸¹ On the martyrium of Saint Sargis see Drasxanakertc'i, p. 83; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 83; Vardan, p. 67, trans. Muylermans, p. 84, n. 1; Kirakos, p. 60.

⁸² Drasxanakertc'i, p. 83. See also Samuēl Anec'i, p. 83; Vardan, p. 67; Asolik, p. 88; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 479. T'.T'oramanyan, *Nyut'er Haykakan Ćartarapetut'yan Patmut'yan*, 2nd ed. (Erevan, 1948), pp. 81, 131 sq.

⁸³ Joroy Vank' – Matt'ēos Urhayec'i – *Patmut'iwn* (Jerusalem, 1869), p. 87; T'ovma Arcruni, *Patmut'iwn Tann Arcruneac'* (Constantinople, 1852), p. 68.

⁸⁴ On Zuart'noc' see Sebēos, pp. 118-119; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 88; J. Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der armenier und Europa* (Wien, 1918), vol. I, pp. 10-11, 421, 427; vol. II, p. 682-687; S. Der-Nersessian, *The Armenians* (London, 1969), pp. 104-106; T'oramanyan, *Nyut'er*, pp.

on the road where, it is said, King Trdat went to meet saint Gregory.⁸⁵ He built there a church dedicated to the heavenly angels, the multitude of the heavenly hosts that appeared to Saint Gregory in a dream. And he built the church with high superstructures and an admirable excellence, worthy of the divine honour to which he dedicated it. He brought water from the river [Kasał, a tributary of Arax] and made use of all the stony grounds, planted vineyards and groves and enclosed the residence with a well – constructed high wall for the glory of God.⁸⁶

The tenth century Arab geographer al-Muqaddasī gives the following information:

Three *farsakhs* from Dabīl is a white monastery built from carved stone in the likeness of a tall hat (*qalansuwa*), in which is the picture of Mary. It stood on eight pillars with doors between them, and from which ever door you enter, you see the picture of Mary.⁸⁷

The complex included the Zuart'noc' cathedral, the patriarchal palace with two big reception halls and living quarters, baths, wine presses, a well and a number of smaller structures enclosed by a wall. What is significant for us is the fact that the building complex was not completed in one stretch, for Nersēs had to leave the patriarchate and take refuge in his native village of Iṣṣan because of T'ēodoros's displeasure with the way in which he had submitted to the will of the Emperor and accepted the council of Chalcedon. This again confirms what we have already said, that without the cooperation of the state it would have been impossible for him to build all the above-mentioned constructions. Nersēs completed building his residence and the cathedral of Zuart'noc' after his return from exile.⁸⁸

Finally, the fourth expression of cooperation between Church and State are the two church councils held in Dvin in A. D. 645 and A. D. 649. Benefitting from the relative quiet, Catholicos Nersēs not only built physical-church structures but he also wanted to reform and reorganize the

77-92; S. X. Mnac'akanyan, "Zvart'noc'i Verakazmut'yan Naxageci Hare'i Šurj", Teł (1959), no. 4, pp. 69-86; *idem*, "Zvart'noc'i Verakazmut'yan Nor Naxagic", Teł (1959), no. 9, pp. 53-75; K. Łafadaryan, "Zvart'noc'i Verakangnman mi Anhajol P'orj", Teł (1958), no. 7, pp. 69-75.

⁸⁵ Agat'angelos, ch. 116, pp. 601 sq.

⁸⁶ Sebēos, pp. 118 sq.

⁸⁷ Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-Ṭaqāṣīm fī Ma'rifah al-Aqālīm*, ed. M. J. De Goeje, in BGA, vol. III (Leiden, 1906), p. 31.

⁸⁸ Sebēos, pp. 150 sq.; cf. Drasxanakertc'i, p. 88, puts the whole construction after his return from exile which seems to be a very short period to be able to undertake such a project.

Church internally and re-establish her legal status and authority externally *vis-à-vis* the *naxarars* - i.e., he tried to emancipate the Church from lay control. The date of the first council is given in the Book of Armenian Canon Law as being "in the fourth year of Emperor Kostandianos (Constans II)", which is the year summer 644-summer 645.⁸⁹ We have seen earlier that a council was held in A. D. 649 to discuss the confessional union put forth by Emperor Constans II and Patriarch Paul of Constantinople. These two councils should not be confused because each was convoked with a different purpose. The book of Canon Law has preserved the names of the seventeen participating bishops and the twelve canons that they promulgated during the first council in A. D. 645; while Sebēos gives the synodal letter of the second. The canons of the council have two aspects. First, they involve internal ecclesiastical relations, i.e., the relation of the bishops to one another and to the Catholicos. In other words, they should be seen in the light of the reforming and centralizing policies of Catholicos Nersēs III. In the second place, they are concerned with the external relations of the Church as a feudal institution with the nobles. It is mainly in the latter that we discern the cooperation between the Church and the State.

We have seen that Armenia, being a feudal land, was politically and ecclesiastically a fragmented country. Authority in the land was divided among the *naxarars*; the more powerful of these princes set up bishops in their own domains. The power and authority of a bishop were relative to the power and authority of his patron prince. Looking at the names of the bishops it is very difficult to tell whether they are toponyms or patronyms - except where the name of the dynasty is used with no connection to the principality such as the 'bishop of Bagratunis'.⁹⁰

By examining the names of the bishops we see that the ecclesiastical administrative unit was coterminous with the principality of the *naxarar*. In other words, we do not see in Armenia the metropolitan system of the Byzantine Church. Here are the names of the bishops: Yovhannēs of Ostan and Mardpetakan, Nersēs of Hark' (Hark'ay), K'ristosatur of Basean (Basenoy), Israyēl of Tayk' (Tayoc'), Yovhannēs of Mardaḡik' (Mardaḡoy), Yovhan of Bznunik' (Bznuneac'), Grigor of Aršarunik' (Aršaruneac'), Sebēos of the Bagratunis (Bagratuneac'), Grigor of Xorxorink' (Xorxoruneac'), Simēon of Rštunik' (Rštuneac'), Israyēl of Vanand (Vananday), T'ēop'ilos of Ašmunik' (Ašmuneac'), Asayēl of Amatunik' (Amatuneac'), Grigor of Anjewac'ik'

⁸⁹ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, p. 200; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 480. Cf. Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 261, dates it in A. D. 644.

⁹⁰ On Armenian nomenclature, see *supra*, p. 19, n. 45.

(Anjewac'eac'), T'ēodoros of Gnunik' (Gnuneac'), Yakovbos of Palunik' (Paluneac'), and Samuēl of Mehnunik' (Mehnuneac').⁹¹

The canons can be divided into three parts: the first four are addressed to bishops, the second four deal mainly with practical matters and the last four are directed against the princes and the minor nobles. The first canon commands the bishops to lead a holy and righteous life:

It is befitting for prelates of the holy Church, that is to say the bishops, to conduct themselves according to the canon of the holy fathers, in holiness and uprightness, in all the ways of righteousness: so that all might be salted and seasoned by them, lest those who have lost their savour be cast out and trampled underfoot by men.⁹² [It is fitting] that they should be an example to the whole flock by their order, so that at the appearance of the great shepherd they may receive the unfading crown of glory.⁹³

The second and third canons forbid bishops from using their ecclesiastical authority in the diocese of an other bishop or trying to seize control over it:

A bishop should not dare to establish an altar or ordain a priest in the diocese of another according to the rule of the holy fathers; but if there is no bishop, with the authorization of the chief bishop [i.e., the Catholicos], the neighbouring bishops shall do so, but the income should be to the church of the same diocese as it was ordained.⁹⁴

A bishop should not seize the diocese of another... and if there be any dispute among the brethren they should make a reckoning but should not dare to do it with violence or seizure.⁹⁵

The fourth canon exhorts the bishops to look after the ecclesiastical institutions of their diocese and not be avaricious:

Bishops of each diocese shall exercise supervision and spiritual care over monasteries and hermitages, they should look for (their) enlightenment and the ministry and the schools; they (should) be fed with their servants and enjoy of the grace of the saints but let them not dare to do anything with violence and greed. Similarly they (should) look after and supervise the hospitals, taking the fines from

⁹¹ On the list of the names of the bishops see Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, pp. 214 sq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 261, *100; Č'amč' ean, vol. II, p. 345. Cf. Ormanean, vol. I, col. 480 gives T'adēos instead of T'ēodoros as bishop of Gnunik'; Grigor as bishop of Ašmunik', and T'ēop'ilos as bishop of Aršarunik'.

⁹² Matthew 5:13.

⁹³ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, p. 202.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 202.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 203.

the fornicators and other transgressors and administering these unto their account. But let them not dare to take anything with greed and compulsion from the infirmaries... Then if any of the bishops or priests, disobeying, should disdain the established canons of the fathers, let him be subject to canonical punishment.⁹⁶

The following two canons and canon eight are strong evidence for the total feudalization of the Armenian Church.

Canon five deals with the problem of the income of the clergy:

Concerning benefit and inheritance we have decreed that as it was from the beginning according to the command of saint Gregory so let it be: he who inherits much let him consume much, he who inherits little, let him have the little; and they should not divide the benefit according to parishes, for the clergy of the holy Church is as the nobility, who are set aside by the blessed saint Gregory and King Trdat. Now they should take the inheritance of their fathers and should be subject to the service of the holy Church, and should obey the vardapet with all gladness. Therefore, if anyone should be neglectful and obstruct the enlightenment and the service of the church and should not send the members of the clergy to school, the bishop shall have authority to admonish and to bring him to the right order.⁹⁷

The sixth canon condemns those clergy who abandon their spiritual duty and become soldiers. If they do not return within three years "the bishop should have authority to reject such people from the privilege of the church by writing and a seal and give the privilege to their relations."⁹⁸ The seventh canon deals with the problem of those taken captive by the invading armies:

Now on account of our transgressions when this our land was enslaved by enemies, many men and women were in captivity, their spouses took wives and husbands without the authorization of the vardapet. Concerning such people we decree thus; before seven years, while the spouse was in captivity and they in rashness took another spouse, the marriage of such persons is to be regarded as adultery; they should bear beating and chastizement, and we have ordered the vardapets to take from their property and acquisition and distribute among the poor, and to separate them from one another and do penance for seven years...⁹⁹

The following canon deals with the question of the property of clergy who die without an heir. The canon says that the Church is their heir, but they could

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 203 sq. Cf. Mxit'ar Goš, *Datastanagirk' Hayoc'*, ed. V. Bastameanc' (Varšapat, 1880), pt.i, p. 233 sq.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 204 sq.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 205.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 205 sq. Cf. Mxit'ar Goš, *op. cit.*, pt.i, pp. 102, 209-211.

adopt a son of some close relation. If the adopted son became a member of the clergy he could be regarded as full heir, otherwise only part of the property could go to him and the rest went to the Church.¹⁰⁰

Benefitting from the chaos ensuing on the collapse of the Sassanian Empire and the absence of the restraining power of the Byzantine Emperor, some of the princes and minor nobles tried to enrich themselves and expand their territory at the expense of the Church. They unduly oppressed the Church and the clergy, trying to expropriate its property; hence the last four canons condemn the opportunism of the nobles. Canon nine states:

When nobles divide their households, many do so malevolently; having lost their senses and gone astray from the Christian faith, they endeavour to cast the clergy of the Church into servitude and bondage. For the blessed Gregory and saint Trdat have ranked the clergy of the holy Church with the noble families, and the land and water of the holy Church were free [of tributes]. Now if anyone should look upon with greedy eyes and should subject the free children of the Church into the lot and condition of servitude¹⁰¹ let such persons be removed from the blessing of the holy Illuminator and from the blessing of this our council.¹⁰²

The tenth canon condemns the manner in which princes drove monks out of monasteries and set up abbots that were acceptable to themselves; moreover, they interfered in the internal affairs and day-to-day running of the Church:

Some of the nobles exercise authority over monasteries, dismiss whatever monk they please, which is not worthy and lawful; and certain ones lodge with families in the monasteries with shameless effrontery, contemptuous of the Church of God. Now, if hearkening to this our command they should turn away from their errors and leave it to the prelates to arrange and organize the supervision of the Church in a manner pleasing to God may there be forgiveness unto the sins previously perpetrated by such people and may they be blessed by this our council...¹⁰³

The eleventh canon is equally critical of the greed of some princes who oppressed the benevolent institutions that looked after the infirm and the poor; they even sent their agents to gather tribute from the sick and needy. The canon recommends that instead of exacting money from such people they should give them a part of their produce to comfort their hearts and to heal their wounds.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 206 sq. Cf. Mxit'ar Goš, *ibid*, pp. 211-214.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 209, accept the evidence of Mss. B, E, and Q. where they omitted 𐭠 𐭡 and and emend 𐭠𐭡 to 𐭠𐭡.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p. 209 sq. Cf. Mxit'ar Goš, *ibid*, pp. 215 sq.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, pp. 210 sq. Cf. Mxit'ar Goš, *ibid*, pp. 85-88, 217 sq.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 211. Cf. Mxit'ar Goš, *ibid*, pt. ii, pp. 412 sq.

Finally, the last canon condemns in the strongest possible terms the way in which some *naxarars* and plebeian cavalry desecrated monasteries by lodging there with their minstrels and dancing girls:¹⁰⁵

Now let the vardapets and elders of the Church repeat the canonical ordinances written above unto the ears of those who hear; and those who both hear and carry out the commands shall be blessed by Christ and by the holy vardapets and by our unanimous council. But if growing insolent and presumptuous they should despise these commands, let such persons be rejected from all spiritual blessings.¹⁰⁶

The canons end with a paragraph blessing the obedient and anathematizing all those who disregarded the above canons;

Now, these twelve chapters we have established, not just something imaginary, but according to the command of the holy Spirit and according to the ordinance of the holy fathers and of saint Gregory and the pious King Trdat and of the apostolic descendants of the same saint Gregory; and those who hear, and are obedient to and executors of this canon, may they be blessed by the holy Spirit and by all the saints of God and may they find themselves heirs of the eternal life and the Kingdom of heaven for ever and ever. Amen.¹⁰⁷

It is clear from these canons that the punishment meted out against transgressors was spiritual only, because the Church itself did not have the means to enforce the decisions of the council. Obviously the Catholicos was counting on the support and cooperation of T'ēodoros to be able to carry out the promulgations of the council.

This cooperation is still discernible during the council of A. D. 649, where both the Catholicos and T'ēodoros united to reject the scheme put forth by the Emperor. T'ēodoros Rštuni, was disillusioned with the Byzantine policies in Armenia which were both vexatious and fluctuating. On the other hand, the outcome of the military confrontation proved catastrophic for Byzantium. During the short period of relative peace – after the second great Arab invasion – instead of the timely reinforcements urgently needed to defend the land against the devastating incursions of the enemy – who knew neither Christ nor Chalcedon – and prevent the country from falling under Arab domination, the Emperor was again raising the question of confessional union. To be able to understand the total rejection of the Emperor's schemes we must look upon the

¹⁰⁵ On minstrels see M. Boyce, "The Parthian *gosan* and Iranian minstrel tradition", JRAS (1957), pp. 10-45.

¹⁰⁶ Hakobyan, *op. cit.* pp. 211 sqq.; Mxit'ar Goš, *op. cit.* pt. ii, p. 413 sq.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

issue in the light of Byzantine religious policy in Armenia and how it influenced Church-State relations within the country. Even though the letter of the council was not sent to Constantinople,¹⁰⁸ the very fact that the Armenians did not respond in a positive manner was regarded as a betrayal. The three years' truce tied the Emperor's hands and he could do very little to force the dissidents to accept his proposition. Nersēs, T'ēodoros, and all the bishops and *naxarars* present put their signature under the synodal letter. Whether it was fear of T'ēodoros or the consequence of a genuine cooperation that made the Catholicos set his seal to the document is difficult to say. However, political and ecclesiastical developments were to drive a sharp wedge between the two leaders, bringing to a close a decade's fruitful cooperation. Soon after the council the Catholicos left Dvin and withdrew to Tayk', for we read in Sebēos that he went to meet Emperor Constans II in Karin from Tayk'.¹⁰⁹

D – Armenia Submits to Arab Rule

Having thus defied the Emperor, T'ēodoros had to be ready to defend Armenia against Byzantine encroachments after the truce was over, and he had to find a *modus vi- vendi* with the threatening new world-conquerors. It was in this latter attempt that Nersēs and T'ēodoros parted their ways. T'ēodoros immediately embarked on diplomatic and military maneuvers on two fronts: internally, he tried to consolidate his power in face of strong opposition from many *naxarars*,¹¹⁰ and externally, to win over the feudal lords of Iberia, Albania and Siwnik'.¹¹¹ He also opened high level diplomatic negotiations with Mu^cāwiya the governor of Syria. After extensive negotiations, when a basis for a treaty was hammered out, T'ēodoros personally went to Damascus to sign the peace treaty with Mu^cāwiya. T'ēodoros showed an extraordinary farsightedness, for many of his achievements in the field of diplomacy and strategy bear witness to his ability and show he was not a mute spectator of the rivalry between Byzantium and the Caliphate.

Before entering into a detailed discussion of the peace treaty and how the Church reacted to it, we must say something about the character and ability of Mu^cāwiya. He was truly a crafty diplomatist, the most cunning of the cunning with a sense of *finesse politique* developed to the highest degree. He had a

¹⁰⁸ Sebēos, p. 142.

¹⁰⁹ Sebēos, p.132, see *infra*, p. 121.

¹¹⁰ Sebēos, p.116; *supra*, p. 90.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, pp. 138 sq.

profound understanding of human nature which enabled him to control himself and also gain control over others. His character is best reflected in the following statement attributed to him:

I do not use my sword where my lash is enough nor do I apply my whip where my tongue suffices, and even if only a single hair were between me and the people, I would not let it be broken... if they pull I let go, and if they loosen I pull.¹¹²

The quarrel between Armenia and Byzantium was for religious freedom and internal autonomy. Mu^cāwiya was willing to grant them both, and for this very reason many Armenian *naxarars* may not have felt much repugnance to the Arab yoke. It would be naive to think that Mu^cāwiya's intentions were purely altruistic: they were realistic, even cynical. He could hardly afford to disregard the sympathy of the Armenians at this stage of his struggle with Byzantium for the control of Caucasia. Therefore, the absence of limitations by the Caliphate on the freedom of the *naxarars* reflected the restraints imposed on the Caliphate by the particular circumstances – the strategic location of the land and the military capability of the Armenians, tested through successive invasions. An outstanding political insight was needed to measure up the situation and settle the issues in a favourable manner for the Caliphate. To receive the Armenians with a grant of autonomy was to win them over against Byzantium, to attack them and refuse any freedom would only drive them to the enemy's side. Mu^cāwiya chose the former.

The Armenian, Byzantine and Christian Arab historians report that the Armenians of their own accord broke with the Byzantine Empire and submitted voluntarily to the Arabs.¹¹³ We cannot fail to identify this voluntary submission

¹¹² Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 283. On Mu^cāwiya's *ḥilm* see Hitti, *History of the Arabs* (London, 1964), p. 197; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 73; H. Lammens, "Études sur le regne du Calife Omayyade Ma^cawia I^{er}", MUSJ, vol. I (1906), pp. 66-108.

¹¹³ Theophanes, p. 344, under A.M. 6143/650-651 says, "In this year Pasagnathes the patrician of Armenia rebelled against the King and made a treaty with Mu^cāwiya, giving him his own son as hostage." The same thing is also reported by Aghābyūs ibn Qusṭanṭīn al-Rūmī al-Manbijī, *Kitāb al-^cUnwān*, ed. P. L. Cheikho (Beirut, 1907), p. 347. Aghābyūs gives the date as being "in the fourth year of ^cUthmān" (27/647-648), and the name of the patrician is not annotated سحماطی . A. Vasiliev, P. O. VIII, Fasc. 3, p. 482 reads it Sempad سحماطی after Theophanes, while Cheikho, p. 347, n. 2, reads it Sempad سمباد . There have been a number of attempts to reconcile the statement of Theophanes with that of Sebēos. Č'amč'ean, vol. II, p. 354 says there was a certain Πασαγνάβης (Armenian Vasak) who succeeded Mžež Gnuni as Patrician of Byzantine Armenia by the command of the Emperor and later rebelled. This same view is expressed by H. Ačafyan, *Hayoc, Anjnanunneri Bararan* (Erevan, 1962), vol. V, pp. 45-46. P. Peeters, "ΠΑΣΑΓΝΑΘΗΣ - ΠΕΡΣΟΓΕΝΗΣ" B. VIII (1933), pp. 405-423, thinks Theophanes has

as being the treaty of T'ēodoros with Mu^cāwiya. Sebēos has preserved for us the text of this treaty:

Then the prince of the Ismaelites spoke with them and said, 'this shall be my peace treaty with you for as many years as you shall desire. I will not take tribute from you for three years;¹¹⁴ then you shall pay according to your oath, as much as you will. You must hold fifteen thousand cavalymen in your country and provide their livelihood from your land, and I will take account [*angarem*]¹¹⁵ in the royal tribute. I do not ask the cavalry [to come] to Syria, but anywhere else I command they shall be prepared for action. I will not send *amirs* into your fortresses, nor any Arab officer from the hosts, not even a single cavalryman. No enemy shall enter Armenia, and if Byzantium [Hofom] should come upon you, I shall send you auxiliary forces as much as you will. I swear by the great God that I do not lie.¹¹⁶

To be able to understand the premises of the treaty and the policies pursued by Mu^cāwiya in their true historical perspective, we must first see the Arab in his own environment and social background – i.e., in the desert society both before and at the time of the birth of Islam. The social, political, economic and to a certain extent the religious organization of the Caliphate developed in the framework of the desert and remained subservient to bedouin mentality and the structure of pre-Islamic desert society throughout the Umayyad Caliphate. Most of Arabia is barren – except in the far south and the north-east and nature is very inhospitable in that part of the world. The bedouin living in the desert had a limited means of sustenance and hence was ready to attack to satisfy his basic needs.¹¹⁷ Besides the few settled communities – such as in Mecca, Yathrib and Ṭā'if – the social organization centred around the tribe (*al-qabīlah*). The tribe was the buttress of life, for no one was safe outside it in the desert. In the tribe the bedouin defended himself and his property against all peril. There was

mistakenly used the name of Σαβώρις Περσογενής in its Syriac form Aprasit'gan and that under Πασαγνάθης is hidden the name of T'ēodoros Ṛštuni. Finally, Abgaryan, *Sebeosi Patmut'yun*, p. 195, n. 19, accepts the argument put forth by Peeters, but thinks that Πασαγνάθης is a scribal error for Παραβάτης which means a transgressor, a traitor. It is clear that Armenia had no patrician called Vasak or Πασαγνάθης at this time, therefore, we should see in it T'ēodoros Ṛštuni who was appointed by the Emperor commander of Armenia and passed to the Arab side.

¹¹⁴ The Constantinople edition of 1851, p. 216, has 7 years.

¹¹⁵ *Angarem* – not found in NBHL. Ačatean, *Armatakan* vol. I, pp. 294-295, gives it as "hamarel", "sepel", Pahlavi *angārtan*; Persian انکاشتن *angaštan*; *Arjēn Bararan* (Venice, 1865), p. 47, gives it as "sepel" meaning to count, reckon, charge.

¹¹⁶ Sebēos, p. 138.

¹¹⁷ E. Gabrieli, *The Arabs*, trans. S. Attanasio (New York, 1963), pp. 10 sqq.; Hitti, *History*, p. 25.

no police force or prison in the desert for those who trespassed the laws of society; all that was left was the *esprit de corps*, the tribal solidarity (*al-^casabiyyah*), with its laws of protection and vengeance, guided by the principle of *lex talionis*,¹¹⁸ of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The whole tribe or clan, collectively, was held responsible for the crime of any of its members and had the duty to defend him at all cost.¹¹⁹

The tribe itself was a very loose organization of clans and families, wherein unions and splits were easily formed and dissolved. Similarly, tribal *confederacies* were moulded and subverted in an independent manner because each tribe, however small, was an autonomous political entity. Tribal alliances were formed for economic and defensive reasons – to protect the peace and defend the public interest. There were different kinds of alliances each with its entailing responsibilities and duties. First of all there was the alliance between two equal tribes as confederates (*ḥālīf*) where the parties were united with an oath (*ḥilf*); then there was the alliance between two unequal partners on the basis of *clientèle* (*al-mawāla*); and thirdly, there was the alliance of neighbourly protection (*al-jīwār*), where a weak tribe asked a neighbouring mighty tribe for protection against a third party. The tribe that asked for protection became the *dhimma*¹²⁰ (protectee) of the *mujīr* (the one giving protection). Each partner, however, retained its internal autonomy and its own religion, on condition that the protectee would pay a certain amount as tribute according to their ability and the surplus of their property; also in times of crisis, they were to fight along with their protectors against the common enemy.¹²¹

From what we have just said we can see that the treaty between T'ēodoros and Mu^cāwiya was no more than the old Arab tribal alliance of neighbourly protection (*al-jīwār*) with its three basic clauses of protection, autonomy – including religious independence – and the payment of an annual tribute. Mu^cāwiya, as the *sayyid* of the “mighty neighbouring tribe”, promised protection against any Byzantine attack. He promised to safeguard the internal

¹¹⁸ Exodus, 21:23-25. Matthew, 5:38.

¹¹⁹ W. M. Watt, *Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh, 1968), pp. 6 sq.; Jawād ^cAli, *Tārīkh al-^cArab Qabl al-Islām* (Beirut, 1970), vol. IV, pp. 313 sq.; vol. V, p. 489; C. Cahen, “The Body Politic”, in *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, ed. G. E. von Grunebaum (Chicago, 1955), pp. 132-163; Hitti, *History*, pp. 26 sqq.

¹²⁰ Watt, *ibid*, pp. 7 sq.; *idem*, *Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān* (Edinburgh, 1970), pp. 3-8; Jawād ^cAlī, *ibid*, vol. IV, pp. 348-365.

¹²¹ See articles 24-35, 37-38, 46 of Muḥammad's “Constitution of Medina” in Watt, *Political Thought*, pp. 132 sq.; cf. R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 272 sqq.

autonomy of the land. They were to be free of Arab garrison; they were to retain their own religion and practice their cult freely; they were to be in control of their feudal militia and only fight against Byzantium when asked to do so. In other words, the internal feudal legal relationship was to remain unchanged. Moreover, the feudal princes were given back most of the privileges they had lost as a consequence of the reforms of Emperor Justinian. Finally, the Armenians were to pay an unspecified amount of annual tribute following an initial period of three years' tax exemption.

In the treaty, as preserved by Sebēos, there is something odd that has eluded the scrutiny of modern scholars: it is the meaning of the last clause, the question of tribute. F. Macler has translated it as follows:

Je ne lèverai aucun tribut sur vous pendant sept ans. Mais, conformément au serment, vous donnerez autant que vous voudrez.¹²²

Ghazarian following Hübschmann's translation reads thus:

Ich werde sieben Jahre lang von euch keinen Tribut erheben. Dann aber werdet ihr dem Eide gemäss soviel geben als ihr wollt.¹²³

Both the French and German translations are good renderings of the Armenian text. However, most probably the original treaty was not in Armenian but in Arabic, for surely Mu^ʿāwīya did not sign under a paper written in Armenian. The Arabic treaty was then translated into Armenian, which Sebēos incorporated in his history. My contention is that the Armenian version of the treaty is a mistranslation of the original Arabic text.

There are a few traditions preserved for us by Arab jurists that shed some light on the manner and amount of tribute to be gathered from the *ahl al-dhimma*. Ibn Ādam has a tradition ascribed to ʿUmar ibn al-Kṭṭāb:

I commend to the Khalīfa, after me, that he afford good treatment to the 'Ahl al-Dhimma, that he keep to the covenant with them, fight those who are after them, and not tax them above their capacity (ṭāqah)¹²⁴.

A second tradition ascribed to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib reads thus:

ʿAlī b. 'Abī Ṭālib appointed me to supervise Buzurja Sābūr. He said: In collecting dirhams, do not flog anyone nor sell his provisions, his winter or summer garments, nor the beasts he works with, and never let a man stand (in the sun) in order to collect dirhams. So I said: O Commander of the Faithful: Then I shall return to you

¹²² Macler, *Histoire*, p. 133.

¹²³ Hübschmann, *Zur Gesch.*, p. 30.

¹²⁴ Ibn Ādam, *al-Kharāj*, p. 54, trans. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. I, p. 60; cf. Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj* (Cairo, 1302/1885), p. 72, trans. Ben Shemesh, *ibid*, vol. III, p. 86.

as I left you! And he replied: Even if you return as you left! Beware! We were ordered to take from them the surplus (*al-^cafw*), which means ‘redundancy’ (*al-faḍl*).¹²⁵

There are two key words in the above quoted passages which indicate the two underlying principles of Arab fiscal policy in general, these are *al-tāqah* (الطاقة) and *al-^cafw* (العفو). Accordingly, the first guiding principle was that taxes should not be above the capacity of the people, and the second that only the ‘surplus’ or the ‘redundant portion’ was to be taken. Among many others the word *^cafw* has two important meanings: firstly, it means a redundant portion, a surplus, e.g., in Q, vii, 198, *Khudh al-^cafwa* (خذ العفو) “[Take thou, or accept thou,] what is redundant: or accept thou what is easily obtained from the disposition of men.” Secondly, to give spontaneously, without compulsion, e.g., ‘*ā^ctaytuhu ^cafwa al-mālī* (اعطيته عفو المال), “[I gave him, of the property, that for which he did not ask; or spontaneously;] without being asked.”¹²⁶

In the light of what we have just said it looks as though the Armenian translator of the treaty instead of taking the quantitative meaning of the word *^cafw*, took its qualitative meaning and understood it to mean “pay... as much as you will”, viz., spontaneously. But in the context of a treaty what counted was not how one paid but how much he paid. Hence, probably the lost Arabic original of the clause read something like this:

I will not take from you tribute for three years; then you shall pay according to your treaty the surplus.

لَا آخُذُ مِنْكُمْ خَرَا جًا لِمُدَّةِ ثَلَاثِ سَنَوَاتٍ

“al aakhudha minkum kharajan limudati thalatha sanawatin”

بَعْدَئِذٍ تَدْفَعُونَ الْعَفْوَ بِمُقْتَضَىٰ صُلْحِكُمْ

“Ba’da’dhīn tadfa’un al-’afwa bimūqtadī sulhikum”

Kister points out that the treaties concluded with the people of Iṣfahān and Jurjān clearly state the amount of tribute they were to pay – it was to be

¹²⁵ Ibn Ādam, *ibid*; the last part of the translation I have changed according to the suggestion of M. M. Bravmann, “The Surplus of Property”. See the following note.

¹²⁶ E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, 1874), Bk. I, pt. v, p. 2094. See also R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, 2^{me} éd. (Paris, 1927) vol. II, p. 144 sq.; and Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab al-Muḥīt*, revised by Yūsuf Khayyāt and Naḍīm Mar’ashlī (Beirut, 1970), vol. II, pp. 827 sqq. (esp. p. 828). For extensive studies on the word *^cafw* and its social, political and economic implications see M. M. Bravmann’s article “‘The Surplus of Property’: an Early Arab Social Concept”, *DI*, vol. xxxviii (1963), pp. 28-50; and M. J. Kister, “The Social and Political Implications of Three Traditions in the Kitāb al-Kharāj of Yahya b. Adam”, *JESHO*, vol. III (1960), pp. 326-334.

according to their ability (^c*alā qadrī taqatikum*).¹²⁷ Thus, the fiscal clause of the treaty took into consideration the economic situation of the Armenians and limited the exaction to what they could afford – a situation that was much more favourable to the *naxarars* than under Byzantine hegemony.

It could well be true that the strong discontent among the Syrian and Coptic Monophysite Churches against the Imperial policy of forcing the council of Chalcedon upon them was a contributing factor for the easy conquest of these territories, but this was only partially true in Armenia. Though the Armenian Church had strong ground to be discontented with the Imperial religious policy, Catholicos Nersēs, most of the higher ecclesiastical dignitaries and some of the *naxarars* were vehemently opposed to the peace treaty with the Arabs, which they called “A treaty with death” and “an alliance with hell”.¹²⁸ Nersēs himself showed all the vigour and capacity of an ecclesiastical statesman, but his actions have often been misinterpreted, even by his very contemporaries. Sebēos accuses the Catholicos of being pro-Byzantine and a Chalcedonian at heart.¹²⁹ If we leave aside the bias of the historian, it is very doubtful if Nersēs liked being under Byzantine ecclesiastical control, but he disliked Arab domination even more, however light and agreeable Mu^cāwiya tried to make it. It was greatly disturbing for the Catholicos to see that the feudal lords, interested in their own class privileges, willingly accommodated themselves to the new regime and submitted to the rule of Islam. Nersēs realized that Mu^cāwiya’s compliant attitude masked great political realism, that it was simply a strategy to gain time. Moreover, the Arabs had displayed great cruelty and disrespect towards the places of worship during their first and subsequent invasions. Furthermore, if we keep in mind that the Arabs as a people and government were very much unknown to the Armenians, while they knew well Byzantium and her policies, we can see why Catholicos Nersēs was opposed to the alliance. Nersēs was at heart a conservative, he preferred the known “evil” – viz., Byzantium – for the unknown “good” – viz., the Arabs. But it has to be admitted that the Arabo-Armenian peace treaty temporarily created much more favourable political, economic and religious conditions than under Byzantine domination.

The news of the defaulting vassal reached Constantinople. The young Emperor, who could do very little to stop this rapprochement, was both irritated and apprehensive. The combination of a number of factors led the Emperor to

¹²⁷ M. J. Kister, “^cAn Yadin (Qur’ān, ix/29)”, *Ar*, vol. XI (1964), p. 278; see also the treaty of the people of Ruhā with ^cIyāḏibn Ghanim, *idem*, “Social and Political Implications”, pp. 328 sq.

¹²⁸ Sebēos, p. 138; cf. Drasxanakertc’i, pp. 85 sq.

¹²⁹ Sebēos, p.141.

decide upon invading Armenia. Constans wanted to keep Armenia at all cost. He could hardly afford losing one of his important military allies, for otherwise he would have to allocate a greater number of troops to defend the area. It was to forestall this tragic loss that the Emperor took a number of steps. He first tried to use peaceful means. Sebēos says:

And in that manner the servant of the anti-Christ separated them completely from the Romans, for although the Emperor wrote to them many entreaties and appeals, and called them unto him, they were unwilling to listen to him. Then he said, 'I shall come to the city of Karin and you come to (meet) me, or I shall come to you and give you assistance (in the form) of stipends,¹³⁰ and let us deliberate together on what is the proper thing to do.' But they were unwilling to listen to him.¹³¹

When these peaceful means did not produce any positive result, giving in to the demands of his troops the Emperor resorted to force.¹³² At the head of a hundred thousand soldiers he marched on Armenia. On the way, in Derčan,¹³³ the messengers of the Caliph met him and handed a letter of warning, saying that the Armenians were his vassals and telling him not to proceed further. The Emperor did not heed the warning and went to Karin. The news of the arrival of Constans with such an army and the fears of the Christian party were enough to sow discord among the Armenian *naxarars*. Some of those who had joined the alliance half-heartedly or from fear of T'ēodoros Rštuni, hurried to meet the Emperor:

There went to meet him the princes and hosts of the (province) called Fourth Armenia, moreover all the armies and princes who had gone there from the

¹³⁰ *Hrog*, comes from Byzantine Greek 'ρόγα meaning money distributed to the people, taken from the Latin *erogatiolerago*, meaning to spend, to distribute money especially for public expenditure. The Greek word means stipend given to soldiers; see E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Cambridge, Mass. 1914), p. 971. H. Ačaṙean, *Armatakan*, vol. IV, pp. 414-416; see also NBHL, vol. II, p. 127. Macler, *Histoire*, p. 133, and Hübschmann, *Zur Gesch.*, p. 31, translates it as salary, stipend; Abgaryan, *op. cit.*, p. 195 thinks that the word *ḥroḡ* (gen. *ḥroḡi*) is a scribal error where two words are joined together *ḥin*+*nqḥ* meaning 70,000 men. The word is also used by Lewond, Drasxanakertc'i, Asoḡik, Lastiverdc'i, Orbelean and BL. Also it is written differently *ḥronp* – *ḥrok'* by Tat'ewac'i and Drasxanakertc'i, *ḥronp* – *xrok'* in BL and T'ovma Arcruni, and it is used in the verti form *ḥronqḡl* – Urhayec'i. With any other of the spellings the emendation would make no sense.

¹³¹ Sebēos, p. 138.

¹³² Sebēos, p. 138; the Byzantine armies in Byzantine Armenia blamed T'ēodoros for their defeat at Marduc'ayk' (see, *supra*, p. 80, n. 51) and wanted revenge; the Emperor gave in to the army's misguided representations, see Lewond, p. 13; Vardan, p. 68.

¹³³ Derčan, a canton in Upper Armenia west of Acilisene, see Inčičean, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-23; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 287.

Řstunakan region. There went to meet him the people Sper (Syspiritis), the Bagratuni princes, the people of Manali, Daranali, and those of the canton of Ekeleac' (Acilisene), and all the hosts of those regions; also the people of the canton of Karin (*Karnac'ik'*), Tayk' and Basean (Phasiane). And there went to meet him the princes of Vanand along with their armies, the people of Širak, Xorxorunik' and the men of the Dimak'sean house. There went to meet him Mušel Mamikonean along with (all the members) of his family, and with some other princes and armies of the province of Ayrarat, Araweleank', Afaneank', Varažnunik', Gnt'unik', Spandunik' and others with them. There went to meet him Catholicos Nersēs coming from Tayk'.¹³⁴

A careful study of the geographical location of the cantons and princely dynasties found in the above quotation reveals that they were all from western Armenia, from regions close to the Byzantine Empire. In other words, they were under the direct threat of the Emperor; their politics and economy were closely connected with the Empire, and culturally were greatly influenced by her. If the princes, the people and the armies of these regions went to meet the Emperor in Karin, joined by Catholicos Nersēs, surely the bishops of these districts were also present, though not mentioned by the historians. We know that Daranali and Ekeleac' were ecclesiastical lands:¹³⁵ besides, when the Emperor settled in Dvin we find that a number of bishops along with the Catholicos were present at the special liturgy offered by the Byzantine clergy in their own rite. In the meantime T'ēodoros Řstuni was not idle, but took the appropriate steps to ensure the well-being and security of his followers. He ordered them to disband and fortify themselves in their own lands, as he had done on the island fortress of Alt'amar, and wait till the storm was over.

It must be remembered that from the first day of Caliph ^cUthmān's rule there was a strong underground opposition growing day by day against his administration. He was a well-meaning old man, weak in personality. He left the running of the state to his cousin Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, a future Umayyad Caliph, and could not resist the demands of his greedy kinsmen who tried to install themselves in high government offices.¹³⁶ Opposition to Umayyad hegemony was swelling, especially in Iraq and Egypt; ^cUthmān was charged with nepotism. Only in Syria did the Umayyads have a secure position, thanks to its able governor Mu^cāwiya ibn abī Sufyān. Most probably this is why the Arabs only sent ambassadors to meet Emperor Constans at Derčan instead of

¹³⁴ Sebēos, p. 139.

¹³⁵ Daranali and Ekeleac' are given as church lands, see P'awstos, Bk. iv, ch. 14, p. 114; Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 100; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 233, n. 291.

¹³⁶ Brockelmann, *History*, pp. 63-65; J. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, trans. M. G. Weir (Beirut, 1963), p. 45; Hitti, *History*, pp. 176-177.

dispatching army units to check his advance. The weakening of the Arab position was another factor which influenced some of the wavering princes to give up the alliance and align themselves with the Emperor. The new situation brought to the surface the two undercurrents that existed in Armenia, creating an open rift between the Catholicos and T'ēodoros. A Byzantino-Armenian war seemed inevitable, the Emperor "greatly enraged, thought of utterly devastating the land".¹³⁷ But Catholicos Nersēs and Mušel Mamikonean tried to appease him with their conciliatory attitude. However, the Emperor was not deterred from his resolution to destroy the Arabo-Armenian treaty; T'ēodoros Rštuni was dishonoured and dismissed, and Constans appointed in his place Mušel Mamikonean. Then army contingents were sent against Iberia, Albania and Siwnik' to separate them from the alliance, and the Emperor himself marched on Dvin with an army of 20,000 and lodged at the catholicossal palace. When Iberia and most of Armenia were subjugated, to celebrate his victory, he

...ordered the Byzantine priests to officiate a liturgy in the holy church, and the council of Chalcedon was proclaimed therein; and they communed together in the holy sacrament, the King and our Patriarch Nersēs.¹³⁸

As we can see, Emperor Constans did away with all the paraphernalia which his grandfather Emperor Heraclius had resorted to at the time of Catholicos Ezr. No council was convoked, no theological arguments produced; the triumphant Emperor ordered and it was done. But, it needs be asked, was it the council of Chalcedon that was preached or the Monotheletic doctrine which the Emperor championed? Most probably the latter, and therefore, to most of the ecclesiastical dignitaries present it was not so repugnant. Only one bishop, according to Drasxanakertc'i, "descended from the dais of the sanctuary and quietly concealed himself among the congregation".¹³⁹

The victory was ephemeral, for the Emperor was obliged to return to Constantinople in the spring of 32/653. Before his departure Constans appointed the Byzantine general Maurianos governor of Armenia. When the Emperor left Dvin, Nersēs found himself in an untenable situation; he had taken an unilateral action and had communed with the Emperor, coming openly on the Byzantine side, and now he had to face T'ēodoros and the anti-Chalcedonian party. The Catholicos accompanied the Emperor to his capital, then returned and settled in his native province of Tayk', for according to Sebēos, "T'ēodoros

¹³⁷ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 86. Cf. Sebēos, p. 140.

¹³⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 86. Cf. Sebēos, p. 141.

¹³⁹ P. 86. Cf. Sebēos, p. 141; Asołik, p. 89; Vardan, pp. 68 sq.

the prince of Řštunik' and the other princes who were with him, were filled with extreme indignation against him." T'ēodoros was able to expel the Byzantine armies from Armenia with Arab help and he even occupied the port of Trebizond on the Black sea.

He then went to Damascus laden with gifts and was greatly honoured by Mu'āwiya, who "gave him authority over Armenia, Iberia, Albania and Siwnik', as far as Kapkoh and the Parhak Čoray,"¹⁴⁰ on condition that he would keep the land obedient to the Caliphate. The catholicossal throne was left vacant until the death of T'ēodoros Řštuni. The coming of Constans to Dvin, and the orientation of the Church and some of the *naxarars* undoubtedly left their ineffaceable mark on the Arab political attitude towards Armenia, for soon we see a change of Arab policy in Armenia.

E – *The Occupation by Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah*

Tēodoros Řštuni's political and military achievements were short-lived. Soon after his appointment as governor over all of Caucasia he fell ill and was forced to retreat to his island fortress to recuperate. The *naxarars* of both the Byzantine and Arab parts gathered to patch up their differences, to put an end to the bloodshed and to save the rural population from famine during the winter. The real motive behind their reunion, however, was not the well-being of the peasantry but their own feudal gains. Benefitting from the absence of the restraining authority of the Catholicos and T'ēodoros, "they divided the land among themselves according to the number of their horsemen and appointed tax-collectors."¹⁴¹ In the meantime, Georgia had also rebelled and joined the Byzantine Empire. All of these developments were not well received by the Arabs. Making the attitude of some of the *naxarars* a pretext, the Caliph ordered Mu'āwiya, the governor of Syria, to send Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri against Armenia¹⁴² to rid the land once and for all from Byzantine influence. Despite the fact that the Caliphate was in grave internal difficulties Mu'āwiya had established a strong Umayyad power base in Syria from where he was able to carry on raids, both on land and sea, against the Byzantine Empire and Armenia. Mu'āwiya sent Ḥabīb against Armenia in the winter of 33/654, who resorted to cruel means to subjugate the land. Sebēos, because of Ḥabīb's violence, calls him "the ruthless executioner", and says:

¹⁴⁰ Sebēos, p. 143.

¹⁴¹ Sebēos, pp. 146 sq.

¹⁴² Balādhuri, *Futūh*, p. 197; Ya'qūbī, vol. II, p. 180; Tabarī, vol. I, p. 2808.

In that year, because of his brother's jealousy, the blessed and God-loving Artawazd Dimaksean was betrayed and delivered into the hands of the ruthless executioner, the general called Ḥabīb, who resided in Aruč of Ašnak.¹⁴³

To escape a second massacre at the hands of the Arabs, the lord of Dvin (*baṭriq*) surrendered. The peace treaty is preserved by Balādhurī:

In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful. This is a treaty of Ḥabīb ibn-Maslamah with the Christians, Magians and Jews of Dabīl, including those present and absent. I have granted you safety for your lives, possessions, churches, places of worship, and city wall. Thus ye are safe and we are bound to fulfil our covenant, so long as ye fulfil yours and pay poll-tax and *kharāj*. Thereunto Allah is witness; and it suffices to have him for witness. Signed by Ḥabīb ibn-Maslamah.¹⁴⁴

It was during this campaign, according to Sebēos, that the Arabs occupied Karin for the first time, Ḥabīb also defeated the Byzantine general Maurianos and the Arab armies plundered many churches and monasteries. To safeguard themselves against rebellion the Arabs took 1,775 “hostages from all the notables of the land, women and children – male and female.”¹⁴⁵ T’ēodoros Ṛštuni, who was sick, recuperating on his island fortress of Aḥ’amar, joined the caravan of the captives to Damascus – or was he taken to Damascus as a suspect? T’ēodoros did not see his country again, for he died subsequently in Damascus in 35/655-656.¹⁴⁶

Soon afterwards Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān was assassinated on Friday, 18 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 35/17 June 656, and this resulted in a long and protracted civil war between the old Umayyad aristocracy – the supporters of the murdered Caliph led by Muʿāwiya ibn Abū Sufyān – and the new Islamic aristocracy –

¹⁴³ Sebēos, p. 149. Aruč of Ašnak, a town in Aragacotn, a canton of Ayrarat; Elišē, p. 79, puts the two separately as two wintering localities for the Armenian cavalry; see Inčičean, *Storagrut’iwn*, pp. 440-441, 508; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, pp. 142-145; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 364.

¹⁴⁴ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 200, trans. Hitti, p. 314.

¹⁴⁵ Drasxanakerc’i, pp. 87 sq. Cf. Sebēos, p. 150.

¹⁴⁶ The date of T’ēodoros’ death and the return of Catholicos Nersēs to his office are closely linked. T’ēodoros must have died before the civil war between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya had started, otherwise during the civil war his body could not have been brought back to Armenia for burial, so he should have died before the summer of A. D. 656. Lewond, p. 13, says that after Muʿāwiya became Caliph, the Emperor ordered T’ēodoros to join him in a campaign against Muʿāwiya; this suggests that T’ēodoros was still alive after A. D. 661, which seems to be improbable. The question of six years of self-imposed exile could be understood from what Sebēos (p. 150) records, that soon after the council of A. D. 649 the Catholicos withdrew to Tayk’.

viz., the companions of the prophet led by ʿAli ibn Abū Ṭālib, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr.¹⁴⁷ Muḥāwiya needed every single soldier that he could lay his hands on, so he recalled all his troops from Armenia. He had also to safeguard his flank by a treaty with Byzantium securing her neutrality in the conflict.¹⁴⁸ Armenia was once again left in control of her own destiny, but there was no one to guide her. At this critical juncture Catholicos Nersēs, hearing about the death of Tʿēodoros, returned to his office after six years of self-imposed exile.¹⁴⁹ Nersēs immediately took upon himself to reorganize the state-machine. Drasxanakertcʿi reports, “Then being of one accord with the *naxarars*, they set Hamazasp Mamikonean as prince over Armenia.” The excessive repressions of Ḥabīb had produced great resentment among the populace and when the Catholicos returned to his office, he revived his pro-Byzantine policy. We read “on account of the impossible and onerous bondage, the Armenians broke away from the Ismaelite oppressors and submitted to the servitude of the Emperor.”¹⁵⁰ Nersēs took upon himself to negotiate with the Emperor for the defence of the land. But the Emperor was busy making an expedition in the opposite direction, against the Slavs.¹⁵¹ What Constans did was to give Hamazasp Mamikonean the honorific title of Kuropalate.

Upon hearing of the default of the Armenians, his hands tied down with the civil war, Muḥāwiya ordered all the Armenian hostages in Damascus to be executed.¹⁵² If Tʿēodoros died just before the civil war began, then Nersēs returned in the fall of A. E. 105/15 June 656-15 June 657; it was the same year

¹⁴⁷ On the civil war see Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 3254 sqq.; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, pp. 217-222; Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, ed. Vladimir Guirgass (Beiden, 1888), pp. 176 sqq.; Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, ed. and trans. C. Barbier de Meynard (Paris, 1865), vol. IV, pp. 34.5 sqq.; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 75-112; *idem*, “Die religiös-politischen Oppositionen-parteien im alten Islam,” AGWG, N. F., Bd. V (1901), Heft ii, pp. 5 sqq.; Brockelmann, *History*, pp. 66-70; Hitti, *History*, pp. 179-182.

¹⁴⁸ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 159-160; Masʿūdī, vol. IV, p. 350; Dīnawarī, p. 168. Cf. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, pp. 355 sq. See also Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, p. 377 sq.; Ostrogorsky *History*, p. 117; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 70; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 99 sq.

¹⁴⁹ Sebēos, pp. 150-151; Drasxanakertcʿi, p. 88; Vardan, p. 69; Asolik, p. 98; see *supra*, p. 127, n. 146.

¹⁵⁰ Drasxanakertcʿi, p. 88. Cf. Sebēos, p. 151; Asolik, pp. 98 sq.

¹⁵¹ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6171, pp. 356 sqq. Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, p. 377; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 117, n. 2.

¹⁵² There were some 1,775 hostages. Asolik, p. 99 says 1,777, trans. Dulaurier, p. 127, says 777 people. Sebēos, pp. 151-152 says that only 22 people were saved from the massacre, among these were Grigor Mamikonean, later prince of Armenia, and Smbat Bagratuni; Cf. Drasxanakertcʿi, p. 91; Kirakos, p. 62; Čʿamčʿean, vol. II, p. 358.

that the Armenians submitted to Byzantium and the Emperor made Hamazasp Kuropalate. Hamazasp, therefore, could not have become Kuropalate before the end of A. E. 105/spring of A. D. 657.¹⁵³

With the return of Catholicos Nersēs III and the election of Hamazasp Mamikonean another short period of peace and cooperation began between the Church and the State. The pro-Byzantine party, led by the Catholicos, had the upper hand in state affairs. T'ēodoros was dead, the Arabs busy fighting a civil war and the pro-Arab party was silenced. Nersēs and Hamazasp cooperated closely. The first expression of this cooperation, besides the role that the Catholicos played in his election, can be seen in the fact that "Nersēs the great asked the Emperor [lit. King] to make Hamazasp Kuropalate and commander of Armenia."¹⁵⁴ The second expression of this cooperation was the completion of the building complex that Nersēs had started and which was left unfinished because of his exile.¹⁵⁵ He not only completed the buildings, brought water from the river K'asā, planted vineyards and fortified the complex with a bulwark of ramparts, but according to Drasxanakertc'i, "He also established in it multitudes of families according to the status of urban people [lit, of citizens]."¹⁵⁶

Scholars have understood the above quoted statement in two ways: Ormanean thinks that Nersēs was constructing accommodation for pilgrims,¹⁵⁷ while Avdalbегyan suggests that the Catholicos brought peasants from the surrounding country, allotted them lands and made them settle around the cathedral.¹⁵⁸ Ormanean's view must be rejected completely because we have no historic evidence that the words *amboxut'iwns erdumardac'* mean pilgrims. Avdalbегyan has also misunderstood the phrase by taking *erd* separately as meaning a piece of land.¹⁵⁹ But both of them have also left out the key phrase *ast paymani K'alak'akanac'* which literally means "according to the state or nature of belonging to a city". The Haykazean dictionary gives the following

¹⁵³ On Hamazasp Mamikonean see Sebēos, pp. 151 sq.; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 89; Asolik, p. 99. Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 405, 438-439, gives him four years of rule; Kirakos, p. 59, seven years, while Drasxanakertc'i gives him three years. Kirakos' dating seems improbable, the most likely duration is four years, for the 3 years of Drasxanakertc'i was probably a scribal error Գ-Դ.

¹⁵⁴ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 88 sq. Cf. Sebēos, pp. 151 sq.

¹⁵⁵ Sebēos, pp. 150 sq.; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 88; see *supra*, pp. 95 sqq. During his absence his *locum tenens*, Anastas Akofec'i, carried on the building activity; see Drasxanakertc'i, p. 90.

¹⁵⁶ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 88.

¹⁵⁷ *Azgapatum*, vol. I, col. 497.

¹⁵⁸ V. Avdalbегyan, *Hayagitakan Hetazotut'yunner* (Erevan, 1969), pp. 156 sqq.

¹⁵⁹ He takes it as *erdoy hol*, see *supra*, p. 25, n. 60, while in the quoted passage there is nothing about land (*hol*), it is *ertumard* which literally means household, people dwelling under a roof (*ert*), see NBHL, vol. I, p. 674.

meanings to the word *K'alak'akan*, “as a citizen” and “city dweller”, and it quotes a passage from Drasxanakertc'i where *K'alak'akanac'* (of urban people) are contrasted with *geljkac'* (of peasants).¹⁶⁰ If the Catholicos had intended to build accommodation for pilgrims or establish a village for the cultivators of the Church lands why then did Nersēs need to give them “the status of urban people”? It seems to me that the Catholicos was doing something totally different: he was establishing a new ecclesiastical urban centre. This fact is further confirmed by the statement of T'ovma Arcruni that after the earthquake of Dvin, in the third year of King Smbat (A. D. 893), Catholicos George II Garneac'i (877-897):

... having abandoned his dwelling in Dvin went out and dwelt in the New City (*Nor K'alak'*),¹⁶¹ at the cathedral which the blessed lord Nersēs III, Catholicos of Armenia, had built in the name of saint Gregory.¹⁶²

In his endeavour to free the Church from secular control, Nersēs not only utilized the church council of Dvin in A. D. 645¹⁶³ but also wanted to be far from the capital, the seat of civil administration, and thus be less open to direct interference from the prince of Armenia, the *sparapet* or any other secular authority. In other words, Nersēs built a new fortified city and made many peasants settle in it, and since Armenia was a feudal country, this meant a change of social status – the peasants were being transformed from the status of rural people (*šinakan*) to the status of urban people (*řamik*).¹⁶⁴ This change could not have taken place without consulting the feudal lords and without the co-operation of the prince of Armenia.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ NBHL, vol. II, p. 969 gives its Greek meaning as ἄσπεῖος “of the town”, “town bred”, and its Latin as *urbanus*, “of or belonging to the city or town, (opp. *rusticus*).

¹⁶¹ The town that Nersēs III founded is called *Nor K'alak'*, “New City” or Srboyn Grigory, “Saint Gregory” after the name of the cathedral: Drasxanakertc'i, p. 111; Asołik, p. 106; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 159 and Avdalbegyan, *Hetazotut'yunner*, pp. 158 sq.

¹⁶² T'ovma Arcruni, p. 260. The text has Nersēs II which probably is a scribal error between p and q. Samuel Anec'i, p. 96, gives the date of the earthquake as A. D. 898 (ՊՂԸ).

¹⁶³ See *supra*, pp. 97-105.

¹⁶⁴ On the question of urban and rural people see *supra*, pp. 15 sq., nn. 36-40.

¹⁶⁵ King Aršak II (Arsaces II) built in Gogovit a comopolis (*dastakert*) called Aršakawan, and to encourage people to settle there, he turned it into a city of refuge. Many peasants fled to take refuge within its walls, but the *naxarars* and the Church were totally opposed to the whole scheme and finally they destroyed the place. See Movsēs Xorenac'i, iii, 27, pp. 213 sq.; P'awstos Biwzand, iv, pp. 110 sq., 13, p. 118-119; SH vol. VI, p. 65; see also Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 494; Inčičean, *Storag, rut'iwn*, pp. 448 sq., Ēp'rikean, *Bnašxarhik*, vol. I, p. 321; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 138.

Hamazasp Mamikonean died after four years' rule in A. D. 661. The civil war among the Arabs had subsided, Mu^cāwiya's position was secure.¹⁶⁶ The central government in Damascus was able to devote more attention to re-establish its authority in those regions where it had been shaken. Catholicos Nersēs for the last time took upon himself the arduous task of guiding the destiny of Armenia during, the critical times. Towards the end of his life he made a complete political *volte-face*, abandoning his earlier pro-Byzantine political stand and adopting the pro-Arab policy of T'ēodoros R̥štuni. According to Drasxanakerc'i,

Then the great patriarch Nersēs, together with the Armenian *naxarars* asked Mawi (Mu^cāwiya) the *amirapet*, (Caliph)¹⁶⁷ to establish upon the sovereign government of Armenia Grigor Mamikonean who was living as a hostage near him... he conferred upon Grigor the princely honour and made him commander of Armenia.¹⁶⁸

Thus the chaos of the Arab invasions was finally resolved by the united submission of the ecclesiastical and temporal authorities to the Arabs, and in the person of Grigor Mamikonean the internal autonomy of the land was preserved. Soon after Grigor was appointed governor, Nersēs III died after twenty-one years of pontificate in A. D. 662.

F – *The Evolution of Arab Ecclesiastical Policy During the Conquest*

Though the historical material at our disposal is scanty and one sided, mostly by Christian historians, upon a closer examination of the available data we see that a certain pattern of Arab ecclesiastical policy evolves during the period of conquest. This pattern is basically the same in some of the other parts of the Christian east – e.g., Egypt and Syria. The two main features that strike

¹⁶⁶ The battle of Šiffīn ended on 13 Šafar 37/31 July 657 where the two parties agreed on arbitration. See Tabarī, vol. I, pp. 3340-60; Dīnawarī, pp. 202-210; Ya^cqūī, vol. II, pp. 219-222; Mas^cūdī, vol. IV, pp. 383-399. The idea of arbitration was disastrous for ^cAlī. because it produced discord in his camp. Arbitration had put him on an equal footing with Mu^cāwiya. ^cAlī's ascendance began to decline; he was assassinated in Ramaḍān 40/Jan. 661, while Mu^cāwiya's authority steadily increased. See Wellhause, *Kingdom*, pp. 100 sqq.; Brockelmann, *History*, pp. 68 sqq.; Hitti, *History*, pp. 179 sqq.

¹⁶⁷ *Amirapet* – coming from the Arabic title *Amīr al-Mū'minīn* – Commander of the Faithful. ^cUmar was the first Caliph to assume the title. The Armenian historians use generally *Amirapet*, *Amirmumin*, *Amir al mumnik* and *Amir mumik*. Only Vardan and Kirakos use *Xalip'ay*. See Ačatean, *Armatakan*, vol. I, p. 223; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, pp. 262, 267, 300.

¹⁶⁸ Pp. 89 sq. According to Lewond, p. 14, this change was due to the threats of Mu^cāwiya.

us are: on the one hand, the Arabs behaved with great severity and in an attempt to scare the Armenians into submission they used the shock technique;¹⁶⁹ and on the other, they tried to win over the people in general and the clergy in particular by making treaties with certain important provisions for churches and places of worship.

From the accounts of Sebēos and Lewond of the first occupation of Dvin, we see that the Arabs killed more than 12,000 people and carried away as captives an even greater number of men. What is particularly interesting for us is the fact that they killed many people within the churches and plundered and destroyed church buildings. It could well be that many of these churches were well endowed and therefore the invading Arab armies could not resist the temptation of plundering all the wealth stored therein; or even that in the heat of the battle they went to unnecessary excesses. But the massacre of people in churches, the burning and destruction of church buildings indicate that though the Arabs allowed them to keep their own faith they probably wanted to make them realize that their religion was inferior to Islam.

The same feature can be seen in Egypt and Syria. We read in the history of the patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria,¹⁷⁰

And in the year 360 of Diocletian, in the month of December, three years after Amr had taken possession of Memphis, the Muslims captured the city of Alexandria, and destroyed its walls, and burnt many churches with fire. And they burnt the church of Saint Mark, which was built by the sea, where his body was laid; and this was the place to which the father and Patriarch, Peter the Martyr, went before his martyrdom, and blessed Saint Mark, and committed to him his reasonable flock, as he had received it. So they burnt this place and the monasteries around it.

In the same way Michael the Syrian¹⁷¹ reports that during the occupation of Syria (A. D. 635-638), the Arabs massacred a great multitude of the faithful who had gathered at the convent of Saint Simeon Stylites near Antioch for the

¹⁶⁹ Psychologically the Arab invasions were a profound shock. The Armenians had not seen anything like what the Arabs did, it was as if the Arabs cut across the national consciousness of Armenians and left them with no roots to cling to; no wonder Catholicos Nersēs was completely stupefied at what had happened, see *supra*, p. 87.

¹⁷⁰ Sewīrus ibn al-Muqaffa^c, *Tārīkh al-Baṭārikah*, trans. B. Evetts, *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, in PO, vol. 2, pp. 494-495, written from different biographies and collected at the end of the 10th c.

¹⁷¹ Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 422, records, "Les Taiyayê...s'emparèrent d'une grande multitude d'hommes et de femmes", Though the Syriac version has 's'emparèrent' the Armenian version *Teārn Mixayeli Patriark'i Asorwoc' Žamanakagrut'iwn* (Jerusalem, 1870), p. 323, says they massacred the multitude of Christians.

celebration of the Saint's day. Around the same time a similar incident is recorded in the monastery of Abilkodos near Tripoli in Lebanon. Though it was a passing feature, the shock tactic was effective and it produced the desired results; the Armenians, led by the Catholicos himself, did finally submit to Arab rule.

The second characteristic of the Arab religious policy was its flexibility. The Arabs made peace treaties with the people of the different cities and provinces, containing special stipulations concerning churches and religious practices,¹⁷² Muḥammad had distinguished between the people who possessed a holy scripture (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) and the idolators (*Ahl al-Awṭhān*) or the polytheists (*Mushrikīn*). The latter were fought until they accepted Islam, while the former were promised protection if they submitted and paid tribute at a prescribed rate.¹⁷³ The divine commandment was:

Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which Allah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the religion of truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.¹⁷⁴

In other words, after the people of the Book submitted and paid tribute there was no more need to fight, for then they became *ahl al-dhimma*, i.e., the state-protected people of another faith.

In theory the two above-mentioned features were associated with the manner in which a country or a city was occupied: the lands that submitted without resistance, on the basis of a peace treaty (*ṣulḥan*), and those which were occupied by force of arms (*ʿanwatan*). The people of the former lands received by treaty the right of protection for their lives, property and places of worship, on condition of payment of poll-tax (*jizyah*) and land-tax (*kharāj*). Abū Yūsuf writing to Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd towards the end of the eighth century says:

¹⁷² Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 172, 173, 200, 201-202; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 167; Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 2405, 2588; Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj* (Cairo, 1352), p. 66.

¹⁷³ Muhammad concluded agreements of submission and protection with the Jews of Khaybar and the Christians of Najrān. Abū Yūsuf, *ibid*, p. 66; Ibn Ādam, *Kharāj*, p. 12; Al-Māwardī, p. 248.

¹⁷⁴ Qurʾān, sura ix 29. I shall be using M. M. Pickthall's translation, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York, 1954) (Mentor Book). See M. M. Bravmann, "The Ancient Arab Background of the Qurʾānic Concept: Al-Ġizyatu ʿAn Yadin", *Ar*, vol. XIII (1966), pp. 307-314. On p. 307 Bravmann translates this verse as follows: "Combat those non-believers who are possessors of a 'book' (i.e., Christians and Jews) until they give the reward due for a benefaction (since their lives are spared), while they are ignominious (namely, for not having fought unto death)."

You have asked, O Commander of the Faithful, concerning the state of the *ahl al-dhimma* and how were left to them their synagogues and churches undemolished in the cities and border towns (*amṣār*) at the time when the Muslims occupied the countries; and how they were allowed to come out with crosses on their feast days. It was on account of the peace treaty that was concluded between the Muslims and the *ahl al-dhimma* on payment of *al-jizyah*, and the cities were occupied on condition that their synagogues and churches would not be destroyed neither within the city nor without... on the condition that they should start building no new synagogue or church.¹⁷⁵

His contemporary Yaḥya ibn Ādam reports a tradition from Ḥasan ibn Šāliḥ on the same question:

We used to hear that the land of our Sawād this side al-Jabal (Media) is *fay'*, but the land beyond al-Jabal was taken under peace treaty. Said Ḥasan: In the lands taken over peacefully, the inhabitants have to pay only in accordance with their obligations under the treaty. They are left on their lands, and are to be charged nothing as long as they keep the peace treaty and discharge their obligations to the Muslims.¹⁷⁶

In contrast to the above stipulation, the inhabitants of lands occupied forcibly forfeited all their rights, they became prisoners of war, their property passed to the state and the clergy who incited the people to fight against the Muslims were killed.¹⁷⁷ Theory and practice, however, do not often correspond in politics – especially during conflicts –, hence the duality of Arab policy in Armenia during the period of occupation.

Though Armenia had voluntarily submitted to the Arabs and had made a peace treaty, yet they had broken their treaty and submitted to the Byzantine Emperor; technically they had abnegated all their rights and privileges. The excesses of Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah were probably a retaliation against the perfidy of the Armenian princes and the clergy who had supported the rebellion. No wonder, then, that the Armenian historians, who were all members of the clergy, seeing his excessive cruelty towards the Church regarded him as the devil incarnate. Fortunately, however, this retributive course of action did not last long; Muḥāwiya revives the old treaty he had concluded with T'ēodoros and gave back to Armenia her internal autonomy and religious freedom as soon as the Church was willing to accept the political suzerainty of the Caliphate.

¹⁷⁵ Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, 2nd ed., p. 138.

¹⁷⁶ Ibn Ādam, *Kharāj*, p. 7, trans. Ben Shemesh, 'Taxation, vol. I, p. 25.

¹⁷⁷ See Mawardī, pp. 68, 84, 231 sq.; 237 sqq.

Despite the fact that in its essential nature Islam is dogmatic and intolerant, one cannot but applaud the religious tolerance of Mu^cāwiya. The Armenian chronographer of the thirteenth century, Samuēl Anec'i, speaking about the period of the occupation and the attitude of the Arabs toward the Church and the clergy says:

And he sealed with an unforgotten oath the contract of this our land of Armenia to hold the Christian faith freely; and he sold them their religion taking from each household four *drams* [*dirham*], three *mot'* [*modi*] of sifted wheat, one horse's saddle-bag, one rope made of hair, and one gauntlet. But from the priests, the nobles [*azatk'*] and the knights he ordered not to take the tribute.¹⁷⁸

Furthermore, in contrast to the Byzantine religious policy – where the ecclesiastical authorities assisted by the Emperor forces the Armenian Church to accept the council of Chalcedon – the Arabs did not interfere in the doctrinal disputes of the Christians and certainly did not think of forcing the Armenians to accept either the council of Chalcedon or the Tome of Leo. On the question of dogmatic disputes among the Christians Mawardī says:

If they should dispute in their religion and disagree in their beliefs, they should not be interfered with, nor should they be investigated about them [i.e., their beliefs]. And if they should contend with one another in a legal claim and go to court over it to their judge, they should not be forbidden access to him. And if they come up with it to our judge, he will judge them according to the dictates of the Islamic religion.¹⁷⁹

G – Conclusion

The administrative, military and religious policies of the Byzantine Empire in Armenia was, and for a long time had been, one of Byzantinization. This fact produced great resentment among most of the *naxarars* and in the final analysis drove the Armenians to the Arab side.

There were three important Arab invasions into Armenia between A. B. 640-661. The first was from al-Jazīrah, in the spring of A. B. 540, culminating in the capture of Dvin on 6 October 640. The second invasion was from Persia, in A. D. 642/3, when the Byzantine army under the command of Procopius was defeated near Marduc'ayk' and the important fortress of Arcap' was occupied on 10 August 643. Finally, there was the great invasion by Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah in 33/653-654, when the Arabs occupied most of Armenia, including Karin

¹⁷⁸ Samuēl Anec'i, p. 82.

¹⁷⁹ Mawardī, p. 252.

(Erzerum) the capital of Byzantine Armenia, and made a peace treaty with the inhabitants of Dvin. On each occupation the Arabs returned home laden with booty and captives.

All of these Arab invasions were exploratory in nature; they wanted to assess the military potencial of Armenians and were satisfied by taking booty and captives. The Arabs did not interfere in the internal affairs for the land and were not involved directly in the vicissitudes of Church and State.

There was close co-operation between the Church and State which was embodied in the collaboration, between Catholicos Nersēs III Tayec'i and T'ēodoros, and later between Nersēs and Hamazasp Mamikonean. The objectives of Nersēs and T'ēodoros were basically the same, viz., the safeguarding of the internal autonomy and if possible the entire independence of Armenia. However, they differed in their method of attaining this objective and had to part their ways, but finally the Catholicos abandoned his pro-Byzantine policy and adopted the pro-Arab policy of T'ēodoros.

Catholicos Nersēs proved to be a great builder, an outstanding ecclesiastical statesman and a farsighted national leader. He guided the destiny of Armenia during one of its darkest epochs in history. He strove for the independence of the Church from lay control but at the same time could subordinate secondary goals for the national gain, for he knew that with the destruction of the nation the Armenian Church would disappear as well.

Finally, despite the initial excesses of the Arabs during the three invasions, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the situation of the Church during the period under consideration was better than under the Byzantine rule. She enjoyed complete religious freedom, and one of the masterpieces of Armenian Church architecture – the cathedral of Zuart'noc' – was constructed during this interval. The Arab attitude towards Armenia could be summed up in one sentence: religious *laissez-faire* and political leniency.

CHAPTER II

AUTONOMOUS ARMENIA AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

The great Arab Caliphate had its origins in the lowly theocratic community (*ummah*) of Medina, governed according to the precepts of the Qur'ān and the example (*sunnah*) set forth by the Prophet.¹ However, political, economic and military realities brought about changes in the purely religious character of the new-born empire. With the victory of Mu^cāwiya and the coming of the Umayyads to power, important modifications occurred in the religious fanaticism and political philosophy of Islam.

The Arabs did not bring with them a superior material or technological culture, nor did they come armed with an administrative system. Therefore, they did not dismantle the administrative machinery found in the conquered lands, but adopted the local personnel, the language in which the records (*dīwān*) were kept and the coinage in circulation.²

In Armenia the clergy, *naxarars* and the feudal cavalry – mainly composed of the minor nobility – were exempt from taxation.³ The Muslim Arabs were a minority in an ocean of foreign people. They endeavoured to keep themselves aloof from their subjects, did not settle in rural regions or acquire landed property at this early stage, but mainly monopolized the military services. Even while utilizing the local administrative machinery they stood apart and above it, feeling proud of their Arab blood. According to Yahya ibn Ādam,

The Prophet said: Do not acquire estates (in different places), for you will yield to worldly desires. Then ^cAbd Allāh (b.Mas^cūd) said: (Property) in al-Madīna should (remain in the hands of people living) in al-Madīna, and what is in Rādhān is (to remain to those) in Rādhān . . . God vested the sustenance of this nation in the hoofs of its horses and in the butts of its spears, as long as they did not cultivate land. When they cultivate (land), they are (like other) men.⁴

¹ Qur'ān 2:151.

² Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 193, 300-301, 465-468; Al-Māwardī, p. 349; see *infra*, pp. 200 sq.

³ See *supra*, p. 141, n. 178.

⁴ Ibn Ādam, *Kharāj*, p. 59, trans. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. I, p. 64. Cf. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Classical Islam*, trans. K. Watson (London, 1970), p. 57.

In other words the Arab Muslims were to be a warrior aristocratic caste with no basis in agriculture or any other sedentary trade, but like a dominant tribe they were to rule over and protect the other tribes.⁵

Mu^cāwiya was a member of the Meccan aristocratic clan of the Umayyads. They had accepted Islam at the last hour and only when they realized that Muḥammad was in full control of the situation. Fearing they might come off second best, the Umayyads shrewdly bowed down. Their motives in conforming were far from religious conviction; it was more a political and economic expediency that led them to accept Islam, for even after conversion their enode of life underwent little change. Like most good aristocrats, the pleasures of this world appealed to the Umayyads more than the good things of the life here-after, a favourite theme of the pious Muslims who characterized the Umayyad Caliphate as being *al-mulk* (the kingdom), because the Umayyads paid little attention to religion. This interest in mundane affairs led them to adopt a more flexible attitude towards political issues in contrast to the rigid doctrinaire stand of the first four pious Caliphs “*al-Khulafā al-Rāshidūn*”.⁶

Mu^cāwiya, as a Caliph, was very tolerant to his Christian subjects. Both the Maronites and the Jacobites took their disputes before him;⁷ he appointed Sarjūn ibn Manṣūr, a Christian belonging to the family of Saint John of Damascus, financial controller of Damascus,⁸ and his Christian physician Ibn ‘Uthāl over Emessa (Ḥims).⁹ He is reputed to have rebuilt the dome of the church of Edessa when an earthquake partially destroyed it.¹⁰

In the light of what we have just said and the great political insight of Mu^cāwiya, it does not appear inconsistent to accept the fact that Mu^cāwiya appointed Grigor Mamikonean – a hostage in the court of Damascus – prince of Armenia upon the request of Catholicos Nersēs III Šinoł and most of the Armenian *naxarars* in 41/661-662. The designation of Grigor itself has a subtle

⁵ See *supra*, pp. 110-113.

⁶ I. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, trans. C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern (London, 1971), vol. II, pp. 39-41; B. Spuler, *The Age of the Caliphs*, in *The Muslim World*, trans. F. R. C. Bagley (Leiden, 1960), pt. i, p. 35.

⁷ Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, p. 134; Hitti, *History*, p. 196; Spuler, *ibid*, p. 37.

⁸ Tabarī, vol. II, pp. 205, 228, 239; Mas^cūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa’l-Ishrāf*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, BGA, vol. VIII, pp. 302, 306, 312. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, AM, 6183, p. 365; Hitti, *ibid*, p. 195; *idem*, *Makers of Arab History* (London, 1969), p. 47; Wellhausen, *ibid*, p. 135, n. 1; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 73.

⁹ Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 265; Hitti, *ibid*, p. 196; H. Lammens, *Études sur le siècle des Omayyades* (Beirut, 1930), p. 13. Wellhausen, *ibid*, p. 135, thinks is fictitious.

¹⁰ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, AM, 6170, p. 356; Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 493; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 456 sq.

administrative connotation, it meant that as an appointee of the Caliph he would rule over Armenia in the name of the Arab government; thus, the central administration very wisely incorporated the local administrative cadre into the structure of the administrative machinery of the Caliphate.

A – The Rule of Grigor Mamikonean

Grigor could be regarded as the first prince of Armenia appointed by the Caliph.¹¹ Although T^cēodoros was the first prince of Armenia on behalf of the Caliphate, yet he was not appointed but only confirmed in the office by Mu^cāwiya. T^cēodoros, however, did not have the opportunity to exercise his office, for he soon fell ill and died in Damascus.¹²

All the Armenian historians unanimously praise Grigor as a great and pious prince.

He was a pious and God-fearing man, and was found to be a guide to manifold ordinances and reforms, prosperity and peace, security and good qualities...¹³

During his long rule of almost a quarter of a century (662/685) Armenia enjoyed full internal autonomy, on the basis of the peace treaty signed between T^cēodoros and Mu^cāwiya, to the extent that his wife Helinē was called “Queen of Greater Armenia”.¹⁴ All the *naxarars*, contrary to their instinctive centrifugai tendencies, were under his firm control. The Arab historians, however, make no reference to Grigor’s long and prosperous rule. But it is also interesting to note that they make no mention of any other Arab governor appointed over Armenia during the same period.¹⁵ Judging from the general silence of the Arab histo-

¹¹ Sebēos ends his history with the rise of Mu^cāwiya to the Caliphate, but he is not aware of the appointment of Grigor Mamikonean or the death of Catholicos Nersēs III. Lewond, p. 14, says Grigor was appointed during Mu^cāwiya’s second year (42/662-663); Samuēl Anec’i, p. 84, says he became prince in A. D. 673 (ՈՀԳ) for ten years; while Drasxanakerc’i, pp. 89-90; Vardan, p. 68; Asołik, pp. 99, 122; and Kirakos, p. 63 mention that he was appointed by Mu^cāwiya without giving any date, implying that it was before the death of Nersēs III. Though Mu^cāwiya had himself proclaimed Caliph in Jerusalem at the beginning of 40/661, he could not have been recognized as Caliph outside the regions under his control – viz., Syria and Egypt. It was only after the death of ^cAlī, that he started consolidating his hold over the rest of the Caliphate.

¹² See *supra*, pp. 127 sq. n. 146.

¹³ Drasxanakerc’i, p. 90.

¹⁴ Kałankatuac’i, p. 137, trans. Dowasett, *Dasxuranc’i*, p. 153.

¹⁵ Balādhurī, *Futūh*, p. 205, says that al-Ash^cath Ibn Qais was the governor of Armenia and Ādhārbayjān under ^cAlī Ibn Abū Ṭālib, and was succeeded by ^cAbdallāh Ibn Ḥātim al-Bāhili under Mu^cāwiya. It is open to question if ^cAbdallāh al-Bāhili came to Armenia during

rians we are left with no choice but to accept the evidence of the Armenian historians, viz., that Grigor Mamikonean appointed by Caliph Mu^cāwiya was the prince of Armenia in vassal relation with the Caliphate.

Grigor's long rule was a period of close cooperation between the Church and State. During his principate he had dealings with four catholicoi – Nersēs III Dayec'i "Šinoł" (641-662), Anastas I Akorec'i (662-668), Israyēl I Ot'msec'i (668-678) and Sahak III Jorop'orec'i (678-703). Soon after he had been appointed prince of Armenia Catholicos Nersēs III died, having occupied the patriarchal throne for twenty-one years.¹⁶ He was succeeded by Anastas I Akorec'i (662-668); his birthplace is given as Akori, a village in the canton of Maseac'otn,¹⁷ and his pontificate is generally attested to be six years.¹⁸

1 – Close Personal Relations between the Catholicoi and Grigor

There are a number of manifestations of the co-operation between the Church and State. The first expression of this co-operation can be seen in the personal and amicable relations between the Catholicoi, Anastas I Akorec'i and Sahak III Jorop'orec'i, and Grigor Mamikonean. Catholicos Anastas was welcomed at the court of Grigor in Aruč and was greatly honoured by all the nobles. Even Juanšēr¹⁹ the prince of Albanta, while passing through Armenia on his way back from Damascus, honoured Catholicos Anastas by paying him his humble obeisances. The prince of Armenia and the other *naxarars* received Juanšēr with great honours, and

Mu^cāwiya's Caliphate. We find among the Armenian historians that ^cAbdallāh was a lieutenant of Muḥammad Ibn Marwān who came to Armenia around A. D. 696/7; see Drasxanakerc'i, p. 94; Vardan, p. 71; Asolik, p. 101. On the other hand, Ṭabarī, Ya^cqūbī and Ibn al-Athīr, report on the occupation of Armenia by Ḥabīb Ibn Maslamah in 31/651-652, and make no mention of any Arab governor over Armenia to the time of Mukhtar's revolt who sent ^cAbdallāh Ibn al-Ḥārith to Armenia, see Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 634 sq.; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 308 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, p. 187.

¹⁶ Drasxanakertci, p. 90.

¹⁷ On Akori see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 395; Ališan, *Ayrarats* pp. 470-474.

¹⁸ Drasxanakerc'i, p. 92; Asolik, p. 99, trans. p. 128; Vardan, p. 70, trans. p. 92; Ter-Mikelean, *Samuēl Anec'i*, pp. 271, 275; Garitte, *Narratio*, p. 345. Ališan, *ibid*, p. 472 gives his years as A. D. 660-667; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 503 as A. D. 661-667, both of which are not probable because Nersēs died after Grigor Mamikonean was appointed prince in A. D. 662.

¹⁹ Juanšēr was Grigor Mamikonean's brother-in-law for he was married to Juanšēr's sister. The latter became *sparapet* in A. D. 637 and died around A. D. 681. On Juanšēr, see Vardan, p. 67; Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 114, n. 1, 115 sq., 125 sqq., 145, n. 1; Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 123; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 69.

Grigor took him to his cosmopolis of Aruč to which the pure dove and pillar of the Church, Anastas, great patriarch of Armenia also repaired; seeing him, the pious prince was filled with spiritual joy and delight, and he humbled himself and was blessed by him as by a holy angel.²⁰

Again, this same close association is discernible between Catholicos Sahak III and Grigor in the manner in which they together welcomed the Albanian bishop Israyēl who had come on a good-will visit on behalf of the Albanian prince Varaz-Trdat.²¹

At that time the pious prince Varaz-Trdat conceived a wise act, and he sent the bishop Israyēl as a token of his friendship to the great Catholicos of Armenia (Sahak III) and the pious prince of the province of Ayrarat (Grigor Mamikonean). They honoured him in a very friendly fashion and came to meet him, and finding him a place to rest, they permitted him to remain for some time in the universal land.²²

In the above mentioned two incidents we see not only the amicable relations between the Catholicos and the prince of Armenia but also the friendly relations between the Armenian and Albanian Churches on the one hand, and the Armenian and Albanian princes, on the other.

2 – *Dawit' Dvnec'i – Surhan*

Another indication of the cooperation between Catholicos Anastas and Grigor was the case of Dawit' Dvnec'i.²³ Dawit' was a Persian nobleman of royal lineage; he was brought up in the Muslim religion and was serving with the Arab army in Armenia. He saw the virtuous and exemplary life of the local Christians, and was so impressed by them that he wanted to become a Christian. Leaving his companions in secret, he went to the prince of Armenia and told him about his intention. Grigor welcomed him with joy and took him to Catholicos Anastas to be instructed in the Christian faith and be baptized. The Catholicos instructed him for eight days in the mysteries of the Christian faith

²⁰ Kałankatuac'i, p. 156, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 126.

²¹ Varaz-Trdat, was the son of Varaz-Perož the brother of Juanšer and succeeded the latter as prince of Albania; see Vardan, p. 68; Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 149, n. 1; 150-155; Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 82; Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 350.

²² Kałankatuac'i, p. 187, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 152. By 'universal land' Kałankatuac'i is referring to Armenia.

²³ On Dawit' Dvnec'i see, M. Awgerean, *Lrumn Liakatar Varuc' ew V kayabanut'eanc' Srboc'* (Venice, 1813), vol. VI, pp. 224-229; SH, vol. XIX, p. 95; Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 91-92; Kirakos, p. 63; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 84; Vardan, p. 70, trans. pp. 84, n. 5, 92, n. 7; Č'amē'ean, vol. II, p. 376; Ališan, Ayrarat, pp. 284, 408; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 505; G. Bayan, *Synaxaire Arménien*, PO, XXI, pp. 225-226. On the name Surhan see Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 317.

and taught him all the dogmas of the Christian religion,²⁴ and personally baptized him in Aruč with Grigor Mamikonean standing as god-father;

And since he was previously called Surhan, then the great prince (Grigor Mamikonean), receiving him from the water of the holy font, named him Dawit' after the name of his father, and gave him as a dwelling place the village of Jag in the province of Kotayk';²⁵ who after (some) years soon received the martyr's crown in the city of Dvin.²⁶

It is striking to note the degree of religious tolerance and internal autonomy that Armenia enjoyed during Mu^cāwiya's Caliphate; the case of Dawit' Dvneç'i is one of its best proofs. The incident must have occurred sometime in A. D. 665, at the beginning of Mu^cāwiya's reign, and his martyrdom was during the Caliphate of ^cAbdal-Malik (685-705). Most probably his conversion was reported in Damascus but Mu^cāwiya took no action.²⁷

3 – Building Activity

A third expression of the positive relationship between the Church and State was the extensive building activity that both Catholicos Anastas and Grigor Mamikonean undertook. Anastas

built the magnificently decorated church in his native dwelling place, in the monastery of the manor of Akoti, fashioning it as a dwelling place for the monks and also for other clergymen of the church in the service of the divine altar, and for the sustenance and accommodation of guests, the poor and needy.²⁸

Grigor, on the other hand, built a monastery to the east of the great village of Elivard, which he established "unto the salvation of his soul".²⁹ He also built a magnificent cathedral in his comopolis of Aruč. Drasxanakertc'i gives a more dramatic turn to the whole story by saying that he had "A divine visitation" and "built it with haste, fashioning a heavenly abode on earth."³⁰ On the inner eastern wall of the ruins of the cathedral is the following inscription:

²⁴ Ms. Marsh 438, *Menologium*, A. D. 1482, vol. II, fol. 388.

²⁵ On Jag see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 446; Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 455; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, pp. 284, 291.

²⁶ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 92.

²⁷ On the date of his martyrdom see *infra*, p. 211.

²⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 91. On the church of Akoti see T'oramanyan, *Nyu'ter*, p. 112; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 472; Strzygowski, *Baukunst*, vol. I, pp. 178 sq.

²⁹ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 91. On Elivard see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 364; Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 441. On the church see Strzygowski, *ibid*, vol. I, p. 131; T'oramanyan, *Nyut'er*, pp. 158 sq.

³⁰ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 90 sq.

- 1 Ի ԵԻԹ ԱՄԻ ԿՈՍՏԱՆՏՆԻ
In the 29th year of Constans II
- 2 ՄԱՐԵՐԻ ԱՄՍՈՅ ՈՐ ԱԻՐ [Ր] ԵԻ Ի ՅԻՄՆ
15th day of the month of Mareri the foundation
- 3 ԱՐԿԵՑԱԻ ՍՈՒՐԲ ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍԷՍ
was laid of this holy cathedral
- 4 ՋԵՌԻՆ ԳՐԻԳՈՐԻ ՄԱՄԻԿՈՆԵՆԻ
by (the hand of) Grigor Mamikonean
- 5 ՀԱՅՈՑ ԻԾԽԱՆԻ ԵԻ ՀԵՂԻՆԵ
prince of Armenia and Hēlinē
- 6 Ի ՆՈՐԻՆ ՋՈԳԱԿՆՑԻ
the spouse of the same
- 7 Ի ԲԱՐԵԽԱԽՍՈՒԹԻՒՆ
for the intercession of
- 8 ԾԻՆԱԻՂԱՅ ՉՍԱ
those who built this
- 9 ԶՍ ԱԾ
have mercy Divine Christ.³¹

Finally, the cathedral of Mastara, in the name of John the Baptist but originally dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is thought to have been built by Grigor Mamikonean. An inscription on the arch of the southern entrance gives two names without any date:

In the days of lord T'ēodoros bishop of Gnunik' was built this sacred house in
expiation for the unworthy Grigor.³²

³¹ On the cathedral of Aruč see Lewond, p. 15; Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 90-91; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 84; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 144; T'oramanyan, *Nyut'er*, pp. 120 sq.; Strzygowski, *Baukunst*, vol. I, pp. 46 sq.; 190-193; Diehl, "L'architecture arménienne", REA, vol. I (1920-1921), p. 227. According to M. Tēr-Mkrtič'ean, "Mi K'ani Hin Arjanagrut'iwnner", ZAPh. vol. II, p. 42, basing his chronological calculations on the date given in the inscription, the cathedral was built in A. D. 669 (Saturday, 24 March 669); Diehl and Strzygowski put it in A. D. 668; Ališan, *ibid*, in A. D. 670; Samuēl Anec'i, *ibid*, in A. D. 672 (ՈԻԲ); Kirakos, p. 62 says in the fifth year of Catholicos Anastas (A. D. 667). We know that Emperor Constans II was killed in Sicily in A. D. 668, see Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 125. Despite the fact that in 669 Constans was dead, the dating of the inscription is preferable.

³² On the church of Mastara see Strzygowski, vol. I, pp. 44 sqq., 74 sq.; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, pp. 134 sq.; Šahxat'unean, *Storagrut'iwn*, vol. II, pp. 46 sq.

Both of these names are familiar: Lord T'ēodoros bishop of Gnunik' was one of the bishops present at the council of Dvin, in A. D. 645;³³ Gregory, a contemporary and a prince who could have undertaken the construction of a cathedral of such proportions, was most probably none other than Grigor Mamikonean prince of Armenia. The fact that the building of the cathedral of Aruč was dated as the 29th year of Emperor Constans II is rather curious; it shows that the Armenians were ignorant of the death of the Emperor in a far away land and presumed that he was still alive, and that they were completely isolated from the west because of the effective Arab hold over the whole country. This fact is also corroborated by the statement of Kałankatuac'i that the Emperor of the Romans took the remnants of his army and went to the west "this was the sixth year of the kingdom of the southerners to the land of Asorestan [Syria], for leaving the land of the handmaid [Hagar] they established their seat of government in Damascus (667/8)."³⁴ However, the tight Arab hold over Armenia was not oppressive or for that matter anti-Christian; on the contrary it was very lenient and gave the Armenians freedom to build new churches and monasteries, to carry on their worship unhindered, and even to proselytize; moreover, to date their buildings and monuments in the years of the Byzantine Emperors instead of the Arab Caliphs. Such extensive building activity could not have been possible without the close cooperation of the Church and State and the tolerant attitude of the Arab Caliphate under Mu^cāwiya. One must hasten to add that building churches, as such, cannot be taken as evidence for a positive relationship between the Church and the State. However, in the case of Grigor Mamikonean, the building activity should be seen in the general framework of his pious activities and his relations with the Catholicoi.

4 – Grigor Mamikonean and the Relics of St. Gregory

A fourth manifestation of the close interest and cooperation between the prince of Armenia and the Catholicos was the transportation of part of the relics of St. Gregory Lusaworič' (Illuminator) from T'ordan³⁵ to Vałaršapat (Ējmiacin). There are three different traditions about the relics of St. Gregory; the first is found in Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i:

And at the time of the establishment of the Godbuilt fold of the rational flock of Christ, he (i.e., Nersēs) having divided the relics of the bones of St. Gregory, placed

³³ *Supra*, p. 99.

³⁴ Kałankatuac'i, p. 154, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 125, n. 1.

³⁵ On T'ordan, located in Daranalik', see Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 6; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 284, Muyltermans, *Domination*, p. 88, n. 3, mistakenly places the village in Ayrarat.

(them) underneath the four well fastened pillars... And the honourable and signed head, with the sign of the cross, he did not put in the depth but in a casket outside...³⁶

The second tradition is found in the History of the Caucasian Albanians:

At that time the prince and the great general of Armenia had brought from T'ordan in the canton of Daranaḡik' the precious relics of the martyr in Christ, the great Gregory, with all his bones to the town of Vaḡaršapat in the province of Ayrarat in the land of Armenia, and they laid him to rest in the newly-constructed vaults of the church constructed by the great Nersēs in the name of St. Gregory.³⁷

And the third tradition is given by Vardan along with that of the History of the Albanians: "And they say, Grigor Mamikonean brought the relics of St. Gregory to Armenia when he went on an embassy to Constantinople..."³⁸

To be able to assess the authenticity of these traditions we should first find out how and under what circumstances St. Gregory was buried. According to Movsēs Xorenac'i,³⁹ after St. Gregory had evangelized Armenia, and filled the land with bishops and religious teachers, having ordained his son Aristakēs as his vicar, he retreated to the mountains to lead a solitary life of prayer and meditation near the Mount of Maneay Ayrk' (grottos of Manē).⁴⁰ He died in solitude and shepherds found his body, but not knowing who he was buried him in the same spot. After a span of time, he is supposed to have appeared to a hermit, and his relics were then transferred to the village of T'ordan. The same story, with some additions, is found in the manuscript Menologium of the fifteenth century⁴¹ and in the history of St. Nersēs Part'ew.⁴² P'awstos also confirms this tradition while describing the death and burial of Aristakēs – the younger son of St. Gregory.⁴³ However, it seems that not all of the relics were buried in T'ordan, for we read that when the Armenian nobles were returning from Persia, after having abjured their faith around A. D. 450, most of the clergy went out to meet them taking along "the sign of the life giving cross and the relics of the holy apostle-like martyr Gregory."⁴⁴ Similarly we see that when

³⁶ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 83 sq.

³⁷ Kaḡankatuac'i, p. 187, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 152.

³⁸ Vardan, p. 67, trans. pp. 84-85.

³⁹ Movsēs Xorenac'i, Bk. ii, ch. 91, p. 178.

⁴⁰ Maneay Ayrk' – also known as Mount Sepuh, on the mountains of Daranaḡik', see Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 4; Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 394, n. 4; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 284.

⁴¹ Ms. Marsh 438, *Menologium*, vol. I, fol. 71b.

⁴² "Yaḡags Zarmic'Srpoyn Grigori", SH, vol. vi, pp. 9-10.

⁴³ P'awstos Buzand, Bk. iii, ch. 2, p. 6.

⁴⁴ Lazar, ch. 29, p. 171.

Catholicos Yovhan Mandakuni (478-490) went to meet *sparapet* Vahan Mamikonean, around A. D. 485, he took with him "the honoured sign of the cross and the relics of the virtuous martyr Gregory."⁴⁵ In other words, part of the relics were already in Vałaršapat around A. D. 450 and in Dvin at the time of Yovhan Mandakuni, while the remainder were in T'ordan.

There is also an independent tradition which recounts that Emperor Zeno (474-475, 476-491) took the relics with him to Constantinople, leaving behind only the right hand of St. Gregory.⁴⁶ Vardan's account, quoted above, reflects this tradition. However, this tradition seems apocryphal for two basic reasons: first, we have no conclusive evidence that Grigor went to Constantinople on an embassy; second, the relics suddenly reappear in Constantinople two hundred years later at the time of Emperor Michael III in A. D. 842. The most feasible explanation seems to be that Catholicos Nersēs III placed in the vaults of the church which he had constructed the parts of the relics that were already in public possession, while Grigor Mamikonean brought the remainder from T'ordan, thus giving a tangible proof of his close interest in the spiritual and material welfare of the Church during his rule.

5 – The Mission of Bishop Israyel to the Huns⁴⁷

The assassination of prince J'uanšēr of Albania, son-in-law of the Hun chief Alp'Ilit'uer,⁴⁸ provided the opportunity for these northern people to attack on

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, ch. 97, p. 573.

⁴⁶ SH, vol. VI, p. 10; Ms. Marsh 438, *Menologium*, fol. 71b; Awgerean, *Vark'*, vol. III, p. 359.

⁴⁷ On the Huns and their relations to the Khazars and other Turkish people see D. M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars* (Princeton, 1954), chs. I-II, pp. 3-40; Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 46 sq.; K. Czeglédy, "Khazar Raids in Transcaucasia in 762-764 A. D.", *Acta Orientalia*, vol. XI (Budapest, 1960), p. 76; *idem*, "Kaukázusi hunok, Kaukázusi avarok", *Antik Tanulmányok (Studia Antiqua)*, vol. II (1955), pp. 124 sqq. (I am very grateful to Mr. D. Barrett of the Bodleian Library who kindly translated the relevant sections from Hungarian). V. Minorsky, *A History of Sharvān and Darband* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 93, 105, 166 sq., identifies the Huns with the Khazars and regards Alp'Ilit'uer as a subordinate Khazar prince. For extensive bibliographical information see *idem*, *Hudūd al-Ālam*, trans. and commentary in E. J. W. Gibb *Memorial Series*, N. S. vol. XI (London, 1937), pp. 450-460.

⁴⁸ On the Hun chief Alp'Ilit'uer and the various forms of his name see Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 114-115; Dunlop, *Khazars*, p. 59; P. Pelliot, *Note sur l'histoire de la Horde d'Or* (Paris, 1949), pp. 182 n. 1; Minorsky, *Sharvān*, p. 93; Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 150 n. 2; M. Barxutareanc', *Patmut'iwn Ałuanic'* (Vałaršapat, 1902), p. 112; A. Z. Validi Togan, *Ibn Faqlān* (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 105 sq.; V. Thomsen, "Altürkische Inschriften", *ZDMG*, vol. LXXVIII (1928), p. 129.

the pretext of avenging the blood of the dead prince. Alp' gathered a large army and overran the northern cantons of Albania in A. D. 62/681.⁴⁹ He crossed the canton of Kapalak⁵⁰ and poured into the plains reaching the province of Uti in Armenia. Alp' made a great number of captives, plundered and destroyed everything that lay on his way and returned with much booty. Varaz-Trdat, who had succeeded his uncle Ĵuanšēr to the principate,⁵¹ found himself in an untenable situation: on the one hand the Huns were constantly threatening the peace and security of his land with their recurring incursions, and on the other, the Arabs exhausted the country with their oppressive taxation. After long and extensive consultations with his fellow princes and Catholicos EĴiazar, with the Armenian prince Grigor Mamikonean and Catholicos Sahak, he decided to send a mission to the Huns:

... to make peace for us, so that he may go to them and by the grace of God incline the minds of both countries to peace and lasting friendship in order that we may henceforth no longer harbour hatred and enmity for them in our minds.⁵²

The choice for the mission fell on bishop Israyēl of Mec Kueank',⁵³ a man of great piety and high repute.

Israyēl, along with a few companions, immediately set off to the land of the Huns on 18 Mehekan A. H. 62/23 December 681,⁵⁴ and reached Varač'an⁵⁵ six weeks later at the beginning of the Lent season. The mission was crowned with success, even the Hun prince Alp' Ilit'uēr believed in Christ and upon his orders the sacred trees were cut down, the heathen shrines completely destroyed

⁴⁹ On the Hun invasion of 62/681 see KaĴankatuac'i, p. 184, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 150; Asolik, p. 100; Dunlop, *Khazars*, p. 59. Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 443, identifies it with the invasion recorded by Asolik.

⁵⁰ On Kapalak, now Ĵabala see Ēp'rikean, *Bnašxarhik*, vol. II, p. 277; Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 181.

⁵¹ KaĴankatuac'i, p. 136, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 109; Barxutareanc', *Patmut'iwn*, p. 112.

⁵² KaĴankatuac'i, p. 188, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 153. For the various attempts to evangelize the Huns see Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 301 sq.

⁵³ KaĴankatuac'i uses interchangeably the two names Mec Kueank' and Mec KoĴmank' to denote one and the same canton in the province of Arc'ax – the tenth province of Greater Armenia. See Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 349; Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 305; Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, *Patmut'iwn Žamanakagrakan*, ed. K'. Patkanean (St. Petersburg, 1867), p. 66.

⁵⁴ On the date of the beginning of the mission see Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 302; Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 154, n. 1, Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 66, puts it at the time of Catholicos Israyēl (668-678).

⁵⁵ Varač'an, Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 16, identifies it with Balanjar; see Minorsky, *Ĵudūd*, p. 453, n. 1; Dunlop *Khazars*, pp. 43 sq., 50 n. 40.

and many of the pagan priests (shamans) were put to death. Unfortunately our sources have no information about the long-term consequences of this mission. It is obvious from the narrative of Kałankatuac'i that no bishopric was established and in the light of the fact that the Huns repeated their invasion against Iberia, Albania and Armenia four years later,⁵⁶ indicates that the mission did not have permanent results, for they had already forgotten their Christian neighbours.

Though Kałankatuac'i, and for that matter all the other Armenian historians, do not give any information concerning the participation of the Catholicos or prince of Armenia in the mission of bishop Israyēl, it may be conjectured with some confidence that both Catholicos Sahak and prince Grigor were directly involved in the mission. Firstly, Armenia was also under the constant threat of the people living beyond the Caucasian mountains,⁵⁷ so that the Armenians were also greatly interested in any peace mission and were delighted to hear of its success; secondly, the bishop who was sent on this particular mission was Israyēl the bishop of Mec Kueank' – a quick look at the map will show that Mec Kueank' borders on Armenia and in fact it had a large Armenian population. Upon his appointment as bishop of this canton Israyēl was sent on a goodwill visit to Catholicos Sahak and prince Grigor⁵⁸ with a double purpose; as an expression of goodwill and as a sign of submission to the spiritual authority of the Armenian Catholicos who was regarded as the *primus inter pares* of the spiritual heads of the two countries.⁵⁹ And finally, despite the nationalistic sympathies of Kałankatuac'i, he has preserved the letter written by the Hun chief Alp'Ilit'uēr to both the Catholicos Sahak and the prince of Armenia:

To the holy bishop Sahak of Greater Armenia and to the praiseworthy prince Grigor, general of Armenia, many greetings. From the beginning of time our fathers, benighted by ignorance, darkness and fog, have slept. But Salvation came to the world: ... At the northernmost end of the world His gospel is preached, and we learned everything from one excellent man Israyēl, bishop of Mec Kołmank'. Now that you have heard from those who have come to you about the miracles that took place among us, grant our request and have the kindness to send us the same man as our bishop. We have also requested him from the holy patriarch Eliazar.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ See *infra*, pp. 168 sq.

⁵⁷ On the various Khazar invasions into Iberia, Albania and Armenia see Kałankatuac'i, pp. 104-114, 151-152; Manandian, *Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte* (Leipzig, 1897), pp. 39 sq., Dunlop, *Khazars*, pp. 28-30.

⁵⁸ See *supra*, p. 152, nn. 20-22.

⁵⁹ I understand that the Revd. G. Kojababian, who is preparing a study on the Relations of the Armenian and Iberian churches, discusses this problem extensively.

⁶⁰ Kałankatuac'i, p. 208-209, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i* p. 169.

If the Catholicos and the prince of Armenia were in no manner involved as Kałankatuac'i implies, why then should such a letter be sent to them by the Hun prince through his personal representatives?

It would not be, therefore, too far fetched to conclude that Catholicos Sahak III and prince Grigor Mamikonean of Armenia, in cooperation with prince Varaz-Trdat and Catholicos Eliazar of Albania, sent bishop Israyēl on this mission to the Huns. It is another indication of the cooperation between the Church and State and a palpable sign of the positive relations between the Catholicoi and princes of the two lands. Furthermore, the reply of Catholicos Sahak to the Khazar chief Alp'Ilit'uer confirms our assertion in the manner in which he addresses the letter:

From Sahak, Catholicos of Armenia, and all the clergy, from Grigor, prince of Armenia, and from all the laymen of the church, greetings in the Lord.⁶¹

B – *Political Developments and their effect on Church-State Relations*

1 – *The Death of Grigor Mamikonean*

The crippling defeat of the Arab fleet at the doors of Constantinople and its withdrawal from the Bosphorus,⁶² coupled with the death of Caliph Mu^cāwiya, in Rajab 60/ April 680, sparked armed rebellion by the anti-Umayyad forces. A three-cornered bloody civil war ensued within the Caliphate which shook the Arab Empire to its foundation. Mu^cāwiya's three successors were insignificant and ruled for short periods.⁶³

Benefitting from the turmoil within the Caliphate the people of Caucasia – Armenia, Iberia and Albania – with united forces unfurled the banner of rebellion in 62/681-682. According to Anania Širakac'i⁶⁴ (a contemporary mathematician, scientist and chronicler):

In the days of this same⁶⁵ occurred the disturbance of the *Tačiks* (Arabs) with violent warfare; Armenia, Iberia and Albania, having submitted to them [for] thirty years, ceased from paying tribute to them.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Kałankatuac'i, p. 209, trans. *ibid*, p. 169.

⁶² See Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 124; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 74; Wellhausen, "Die Kämpfe", pp. 414 sqq.

⁶³ Yazīd I (680-683); Mu^cāwiya II (683/4); Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam (684-5).

⁶⁴ For a biography and a list of the works of Anania Širakac'i, see M. Abelyan, *Erker* (Erevan, 1968), vol. III, pp. 413-428.

⁶⁵ I.e., Constantine IV, 668-685.

⁶⁶ A. Abrahamyan, *Anania Širakac'u Matenagrut'yun* (Erevan, 1944), p. 398. The Anonymous chronology of the 7th century, ed. B. Sargisean (Venice, 1904) is ascribed to him.

But the peace of Armenia was disturbed and the people of the three lands were subjected to a worse calamity. The people living beyond the Caucasian mountains, who were always a threat to the peace of the region, launched one of their periodic raids:

During the time of the war which (was) among the *Tačks*, having submitted to the Arab yoke for thirty years Armenia, Iberia and Albania ceased from their servitude; and the days of their rebellion lasted three years. In the fourth year, the people of the north who are called *Xazirk'* became masters over this our land of Armenia and in the battle they killed the prince Grigor, many of the *naxarars* and the princes of Iberia and Albania. Then they went marauding over this our land of Armenia, they ravished many cantons and boroughs and having taken booty and captives, they returned to their own country.⁶⁷

Anania sirakac'i gives the precise date of this invasion.

In his first year⁶⁸ the people of the north, who are called *Hazirk'*, occupied Armenia, Iberia and Albania, and during the fighting they killed the princes of Armenia, Iberia and Albania, in the month of Sahml, which was the tenth day of the month, in the 134th year (ֆւղ) of the Armenian calendar.⁶⁹

We know that 1 Navasart A. D. 685 falls on the 8th of June; thus by chronological calculations we see that 10 Sahmi 134 A. E. corresponds to 15 August 685, which falls a month before the beginning of Justinian's rule, when Grigor Mamikonean died after a long and prosperous rule.⁷⁰

During the last three years of Grigor's rule when Armenia was independent, we find no evidence that the cooperation between the Church and State was discontinued. We have seen that all through Grigor's reign there was a positive and a close relation; therefore, it would not be unreasonable to assume that this cooperation continued till the death of Grigor Mamikonean. The Khazar invasion and the death of Grigor Mamikonean coincided with the appearance of two important personalities in the historical arena; these were Caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (65/685-86/705) and Emperor Justinian II (65/685-75/695, 86/705-92/711).

⁶⁷ Lewond, pp. 15 sq.

⁶⁸ I.e. Justinian II's first year, A. D. 685/6.

⁶⁹ Abrahamyan, *Anania*, p. 398.

⁷⁰ The Khazar invasion during which Grigor died according to Asolik, p.100, was in the fifth year of Catholicos Sahak III and 130 A. E.; on p. 142 he says in the first year of Emperor Justinian the Khazars occupied Armenia, Iberia and Albania. The fifth year of Catholicos Sahak III corresponds to A. D. 682/3, while 130 A. E. = A. D. 681/2. It seems that "the fifth year" is a scribal error which should be emended to read "the seventh year" եֵօթ [եւսթ]: thus we get A. D. 684/5. This emendation is supported by the fact that both Drasxanakertc'i, p. 93 and Vardan, p. 70 put the invasion in the seventh year of the Catholicos.

2 – Independent Armenia between the Caliphate and the Byzantine Empire

°Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān inherited from his father a Caliphate which was exhausted and fragmented by civil wars. °Abd al-Malik had to reunite the Caliphate and reoccupy all the lost territories.

First of all, he had to face the Byzantine threat on his flank before addressing himself to the other two problems. °Abd al-Malik concluded a peace treaty with Emperor Justinian II. As usual the Arab historians are silent about the details, but the Christian historians provide us with the terms of the treaty, stipulating the daily payment of 1000 dinars, one slave and one thoroughbred horse. The tribute from Cyprus, Armenia and Iberia was to be equally divided between the Caliphate and the Empire.⁷¹ The question of dividing the tribute of Armenia between Byzantium and the Caliphate could not in fact have arisen because Armenia had already ceased from paying tribute to the Caliphate.

It was only in 72/691 that °Abd al-Malik could turn his attention to Iraq when for the third time he marched against Muṣab, and engaged him in battle at Dayr al-Jāthliq (Monastery of the Catholicos) between Maskin and Bājumayra and defeated him.⁷² After his victory °Abd al-Malik dispatched al-Ḥajjā ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī against Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca who was finally killed in battle on 17 Jumadā 73/18 September 692.⁷³ Thus, °Abd al-Malik could not address himself to the problem of the reoccupation of Armenia before the defeat of °Abdallah ibn al-Zubayr towards the end of A. D. 692 and a more favorable peace treaty with Byzantium.

In the meantime there is some confusion as to who succeeded Grigor Mamikonean in the office of Prince of Armenia. The Arab historians preoccupied with the civil war say nothing about Armenia; on the other hand, the Armenian historians mention different *naxarars* as having succeeded Grigor. J. Marquart has dealt with the problem in a satisfactory manner⁷⁴ – Grigor was

⁷¹ See Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6178, p. 363; Constantine Porphy., pp. 93 sqq.; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 469 sq.; Bar Hebraeus, p. 103; Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 497. See also Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XII, p. 7; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 129.

⁷² Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, ed. S. D. F. Goitein (Jerusalem, 1936), vol. V, p. 337-342, 346; Ya°qūbī, vol. II, pp. 317 sq.; Ibn Sa°d, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, ed. E. Sachau (Leiden, 1905), vol. V, pp. 136, 169; Mas°ūdī, *Murūj*, vol. V, pp. 242, 248 sq.; all put the battle in Jumadā 72/691; only Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 809-811, citing al-Wāqidī, and Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, pp. 263 sq. date it in 71/end of 690.

⁷³ Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. V, pp. 346, 352, 368; Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 829 sqq.; Ya°qūbī, vol. II, p. 318; Ibn Sa°d, vol. V, p. 169; Mas°ūdī, *Murūj*, vol. V, p. 265; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, pp. 284, 290.

⁷⁴ Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 439, 442 sq. Cf. Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 341, 343-344, n. 16; A. Ter-Ghevondian, "Le 'Prince d'Arménie' à l'époque de la domination arabe", REA, N.S. vol. III (1966), p. 186.

succeeded by Ašot Bagratuni (685-688). Although Toumanoff says that he was prince of Armenia for the Caliph and ruled from A. D. 686-690,⁷⁵ our sources do not support his assertion. During his short rule Armenia enjoyed a certain degree of independence despite the punitive invasion of the Byzantine general Leontius in A. D. 686.⁷⁶ The Byzantine army devastated twenty-five cantons, made 8000 households captive and returned most probably because the Emperor was planning to undertake an expedition against the Bulgars and Slavs who had overrun Macedonia.⁷⁷ This invasion forced Ašot to mend his fences with the Empire. The close cooperation between the Church and State, which was a characteristic of the administration of Grigor Mamikonean, continued during Ašot's principate. According to Lewond he was

Celebrated and the most esteemed among the *naxarars* of Armenia; grand and illustrious in his sovereignty, temperate in all his earthly life and virtuous, nobler than all the rest and knowing the fear of God, zealous for all meritorious works and diligent in love of study. He enriched the churches of God with doctrinal studies and many ministers (lit. with a congregation of servants); he also honoured the churches with splendid utensils from his own treasures.⁷⁸

His care for the welfare of the Church was shown in the way that he encouraged the establishment of new monasteries for the training of the clergy and endowed the churches with "splendid utensils from his own treasures". He also built the church of Darunk' in his ostan,⁷⁹ placed in it the picture of the Saviour which his son had brought from the West⁸⁰ – Constantinople? – and called it the Church of Amenap'rkič' (Saviour of all men). On the occasion of the dedication of the church Ašot is supposed to have composed and sung a chant known as "Zors əst Patkeri".⁸¹ Even if he was not the author of the chant, he may have commissioned someone else to compose it, and may well have sung it during the ceremonies – again an indication of his piety and positive attitude towards

⁷⁵ Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 341.

⁷⁶ According to Lewond, p. 17, the invasion took place in the second year of Justinian (686/7), when Ašot was prince of Armenia; Asołik, p. 100, provides us with the details.

⁷⁷ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6180, p. 364; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 130.

⁷⁸ Lewond, p. 16.

⁷⁹ Darunk', a fortress in the canton of Kogovit now known as Dogu Bayazid, see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 364 sq.; Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 447; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 496. On the church see Lewond, p. 16; Vardan, p. 71; Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 51; Šahxatunean, *Storagrut'iwn*, vol. I, p. 62; G. Yovsēpean, *Hawuc' T'ari Amenap'rkič' ew Noynanun Yu-šarjanner Hay Aruesti Mēj*, (Jerusalem, 1937), pp. 1-2, Strzygowski, *Baukunst*, vol. II, p. 689.

⁸⁰ Vardan, p. 71; Lewond, p. 16.

⁸¹ Vardan, *ibid*; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 496.

the Church. Finally, we know that Ašot Bagratuni took keen interest in dogmatic questions and ecclesiastical controversies, and he commissioned philosopher Dawit' of Hark' to write a theological treatise for the defence of the faith.⁸² Ašot's peaceful and prosperous rule came to an abrupt end when he died of wounds received while fighting against marauding Arab brigands in the region of Ĵula and Xram at the beginning of his fourth year, i.e., the end of summer A. D. 688.⁸³

C – Byzantium in Control of Armenia

According to Asoĥik, Ašot Bagratuni died in the third year of his rule (probably a scribal error between Գ and Դ, hence should be read fourth year). Emperor Justinian, in the fourth year of his rule,⁸⁴ marched against Armenia at the head of a large army,

... and having divided his armies into three, he sent them against Armenia, Iberia and Albania, and summoned unto him all the princes of these lands; and they went to him not by their free will but from compulsion. And having taken some of the princes with him and having demanded the sons of others as hostages – among them the Catholicos of Armenia, Sahak, together with five bishops – he imprisoned them by him. And he honoured some of the princes with royal gifts, established them as rulers over the lands, Nersēh Lord of Širak and count of Kapoytiroc⁸⁵ prince of Armenia... and left 30,000 (ԼԴ) troops as help to the princes; and he returned to Constantinople. Nersēh Kamsarakan remained prince of Armenia for four years.⁸⁶

Thus with the rule of Nersēh Armenia passed completely under Byzantine control in A. D. 689.

⁸² G. Yovsēp'ean "Dawt'i P'ilisop'ayi i Xndroy Ašotoy Patrk'i", A (1906), pp. 270 sqq.; (1907), pp. 81 sqq., 274 sqq.

⁸³ Muš^cab, after having finished with al-Mukhtār in 14 Ramadān 67/3 March 687 (Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. V, pp. 274, 331 sq.; Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 750; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, p. 227) appointed al-Muhallab ibn Abū Sufrah as governor of al-Mawṣil, al-Jazīrah, Ādhārbayjān and Armenia. It could well be that al-Muhallab sent an expeditionary force from the south east into Armenia to chastize the rebellious Armenians, and while fighting against such a marauding band that Ašot was wounded and died, see Lewond, p. 18; Asoĥik, p. 100.

⁸⁴ Asoĥik, p. 100. Emperor Constantine IV died in September A. D. 685 and was succeeded by his sixteen years old son Justinian II, see Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 129. Thus the fourth year of Justinian would be September 688–September 689. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, p. 364 puts the invasion in AM 6179.

⁸⁵ Kapoytiroc' a town in Basean see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 439, Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 18.

⁸⁶ Asoĥik, pp. 100 sq; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 84; Kirakos, p. 63; and Garitte, *Narratio*, p. 440, all say that he ruled three years. The Albanian hostages were prince Varaz-Trdat and his three sons, Kaĥankatuac'i, pp. 250 sq.

The Armenian historians give very little information about the person and the rule of Nersēh Kamsarakan. Before his elevation to the office of prince of Armenia he was the lord of Širak and Aršarunik and the count of Kapoytiroc'. The Kamsarakan dynasty is well known for its pro Byzantine sympathies.⁸⁷ Even before his appointment as prince of Armenia, Nersēh bore the Byzantine honourific titles of count, patrician and ex-consul (ἀρχὴ ὑπάτων). From what the historians relate it would be very difficult to construct any picture of Church-State relations during his short rule. However, we have an important source that supplements the information given by the historians. The colophon of the translation of the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates by P'ilon of Tirak, towards the end of the seventh century.⁸⁸ Two versions of the translation have come to us, a long and an abbreviated one, both of which appear to be the work of the same author. The colophon of the long version gives the exact date when and the circumstances under which the translation was done, and the name of the translator:

In the year six-thousand-two-hundred-and-four of this transitory world, as the chronology of saint Sop'i [Hagia sophia] the great cathedral of the ecumenical capital of Constantinople holds. And in the seven-hundred-and-fourth year of the coming of Christ; and in the year one-hundred-and-forty-four (of our era); in the ninth of the indiction; during the first year of the rule of second [third?] Lewoni [Leo II] autocrat and Augustus...P'ilon Tirakacti translated these books in the first attempt, partially abridged from the Ecclesiastical History of Sokrat... having been in a foreign land.⁸⁹

The colophon of the shorter version gives the name of the prince who commissioned the translation:

O lord Nersēh Kamsarakan, ex-consul, patrician, who are constructor of churches; may you always receive peace from Christ who is the giver of peace at all times; may you possess the zeal of the pious kings to sustain in your person the diligence of piety.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ See *supra*, p. 121; S. Kogean, *Kamsarakanne Teark' Širakay ew Aršaruneac'* (Vienna, 1926), pp. 70 sqq.; Toumanoff, *Studies*, pp. 206-208.

⁸⁸ M. Tēr-Movsēsean, *Sokratay Sk'olastikosi Ekelec'akan Patmut'iwn*, trans. P'ilon Tirakac'i (Vałaršapat, 1897); Asohik, p. 99, says P'ilon Tirakac'i translated the History of Socrates at the time of Catholicos Anastas (662-668).

⁸⁹ Yovsēp'ean, *Yišatakarank'*, vol. I, pp. 49-50; Tēr-Movsēsean, *Sokrat*, pp. lxxxiii sqq.; for the French translation see P. Peeters, "A propos de la version arménienne de l'historien Socrate", *MB*, vol. II (1934), pp. 649 sq.

⁹⁰ Dashian, *Catalog*, vol. I, pp. 926 sqq.; Tēr-Movsēsean, *ibid*, p. 689; Kogean, *Kamsarakans*, p. 153; L. Ališan, *Širak* (Venice, 1881), p. 5.

From the style of the language of the colophon, “transitory world”,⁹¹ “Saint Sophia the Great Cathedral”, and “ecumenical capital of Constantinople”; the manner in which he gives the date of the translation, “The chronology of saint Sophia”, “the ninth of the indiction”,⁹² and “the first year of Leo II autocrat and Augustus”; and the nature of the translated work, i.e. the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates, we could deduce that the translator P’ilon of Tirak,⁹³ was a Chalcedonian Armenian coming from a canton bordering with Iberia. The translation was undertaken at the request of Nersēh Kamsarakan, prince of Armenia and ‘builder of churches’, around A. D. 695-696.⁹⁴ We could further surmise that Nersēh Kamsarakan himself was a Chalcedonian; if that remains uncertain, he undoubtedly had pro-Byzantine sympathies because, firstly, he was appointed to the office of prince of Armenia by Emperor Justinian II, which could have been hardly imaginable if he had not been pro-Byzantine; secondly, he commissioned P’ilon to translate a western historian whose work had no direct importance for the Armenian Church; thirdly, he encouraged Catholicos Sahak III to come to an understanding with the Byzantine Church;⁹⁵ and finally (a piece of indirect evidence), both Lewond and Drasxanakerc’i ignore him, which implies that he was a champion of the Byzantine cause, following a policy opposed to that of the Bagratids whose praises they both sing.

It is evident, therefore, that Nersēh Kamsarakan took great interest in the affairs of the Church; he was not only a pious man and a Christian prince but also a patron of literary men. His interest in the welfare of the Church and the nation as a whole led him to encourage Catholicos Sahak to accept the invitation of church union that Emperor Justinian had extended. Could the Catholicos, under the circumstances, dissent by opposing the desire of the prince and disregarding the invitation of the Emperor? The Arabs were busy fighting a long and bloody civil war which seemed to have no end, and the

⁹¹ P. Peeters has pointed out that the statement “transitory world” is a Georgian phrase indicating the fact that the work was done in Chalcedonian circles near the Georgian frontiers; “Socrate” pp. 657 sq.; *idem*, “Les débuts du christianisme en Géorgie d’après les sources hagiographiques”, AB vol. L (1932), pp. 46 sq.

⁹² An Indiction is a fifteen years cycle starting with 1st September 312. It was written in the ninth year of the 26th Indiction thus $25 \times 15 + 9 + 312 = \text{A.D. } 696$. See Tēr-Movsēsean, Sokrat, p. lxxxiv; Peeters, “Socrate”, p. 651.

⁹³ Ališan, *Širak*, p. 5; and G. Zarphanalean, *Haykakan Hin Dprut’ean Patmut’iwn* (IV-XIII c.), third ed. (Venice, 1897), p. 474 say it should be read Širak changing the S into a Š, but Tēr-Movsēsean has indicated that there was a canton called Tirak, see Sokrat, p. lxxxii, n. 2.

⁹⁴ On the synchronism of the date see Tēr-Movsēsean, *Sokrat*, pp. lxxxiii sqq.; Peeters, *Socrate*, pp. 651-657.

⁹⁵ See *infra*, pp. 183 sq.

Byzantine army was in full control of the Caucasian countries. In any event, the Catholicos did in fact conform and went to Constantinople along with a number of Byzantinophile bishops to hammer out the planned church union. Yet one cannot deny the fact that there was a large body of ecclesiastical dignitaries who were opposed to Nerseh Kamsarakan and his rapprochement with Byzantium; they were strong nationalists and made Monophysitism a rallying flag in their struggle against Byzantine political and ecclesiastical domination. However, even these staunch Monophysite clergy could do nothing so long as the armies of Justinian were in control of Armenia and outwardly acquiesced until such time that the Byzantine military grip over Armenia was broken. Thus, some voluntarily obeyed while others involuntarily accepted the will of the prince.

D – *Byzantine Religious Policy – Victory of Chalcedonianism*

After the defeat and withdrawal of the Arab armies from Constantinople Emperor Constantine IV tried to check the Bulgar threat in the west but suffered a great defeat at the hands of the Bulgar King Isperich (Asparuch). The Emperor made the best of the situation by signing a peace settlement, recognizing the *status quo* and pledging the payment of an annual subsidy.⁹⁶ And with the lull that followed the peace treaty the Emperor turned his attention to more pressing internal and ecclesiastical problems. He realized that the eastern Monophysite provinces were lost for good to the Empire, hence the doctrine of the “One Will”, as set forth in the Ekthesis and camouflaged in the Typos, was now more of a political liability than an asset because it had alienated most of the west and had failed to help to retain the east. The new situation required a new and drastic politico-ecclesiastical reorientation. Thus to restore peace and harmony within the Empire and to put an end to religious dissensions the Emperor, in consultation with the Pope, called an Ecumenical Council in Constantinople – known as the Third Council of Constantinople or the Sixth Ecumenical Council. The Council officially opened on 7 November 680 and the transactions lasted till 16 September 681. The Emperor personally presided over the first eleven and the last sessions. It falls beyond the scope of the present thesis to discuss the proceedings. The council concluded by saying:

Following the five holy and Oecumenical Synods and the Fathers of repute, and confessing that our Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Holy Trinity, is perfect in the Godhead and perfect in the manhood... we also declare that there are two natural

⁹⁶ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6171, pp. 358 sqq.; Lebeau-St. Martin, vol. XI, pp. 445-448; Ostrogorsky, *History*, pp. 125127.

θελήσεις or θελήματα and two natural energies, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀμερίστως, ἀσυνχύτως, in Christ, according to the teaching of the holy Fathers. And the two natural wills are not opposed to each other, – God forbid, – as the impious heretics said, but His human will followed, and it does not resist and oppose, but rather is subject to the divine and almighty will.⁹⁷

The Council then went on to anathematize patriarchs Sergius, Pyrrhus, Paul and Peter of Constantinople, Cyrus of Alexandria and Makarios of Antioch, pope Honorius, bishop Theodore of Pharan and all such that confessed the Monothelete doctrine.⁹⁸ Thus after more than seven decades of Monotheletism, confirmed by councils and backed by the Emperors from Heraclius to Constans II, the Chalcedonian Dyothelete doctrine triumphed.

Whatever the outcome of the Sixth Ecumenical Council and its influence on the relations between Emperor, Patriarch and Pope, the resolutions of the synod had its unavoidable repercussions in Armenia. The victory of unadulterated Chalcedonianism in Constantinople was another obstacle too on the path of rapprochement between the Armenian and Byzantine Churches. Many high ranking Armenian clergy, including Catholicoi, who had associated themselves openly with the Byzantine Church on the common ground of Monotheletism were at once deprived of their *locus standi* and this new situation was to have its reaction during the subsequent attempt at church union, and later all through the period of Arab domination. A number of temporal considerations coupled with the triumph of Dyothelite-Dyophysite doctrine in the Byzantine Empire led the Armenian Church to move firmly into the Monophysite camp.

E – Church Union under Emperor Justinian II and Catholicos Sahak III

We saw above that Emperor Justinian II, in his fourth year, occupied all of Armenia, Iberia and Albania, and at once invited the princes and nobles of these lands to assemble before him. Among those present was Catholicos Sahak III of Armenia and a number of bishops as well as ranking ecclesiastical dignitaries of Iberia and Albania; probably the Emperor found it expedient on that occasion to call a regional church council in Theodosiopolis (Karin) and revived the old question of church unity. According to Grigor Tat'ewac'i:

The Greek (*Yunac'*), Roman (*Hromac'?*), Armenian, Iberian and Albanian bishops, and the Catholicos Sahak of Armenia gathered by the command of the great King

⁹⁷ Hefele, *Councils*, vol. V, pp.174 sq.

⁹⁸ Hefele-Leclercq, vol. III, pp. 472-538; Bréhier, "Les derniers Héraclides", HE, vol. V, pp. 183-191.

Justinian (Ustianos); and they confirmed the canons of the three holy councils that were in Nicea, in Constantinople and in Sphesus. And they anathematized the heresy of Marcian, of Artemon and the Tome of Leo, and united in the one creed of the holy Apostles, and they added to the canons of the holy council whatever was necessary, nine chapters, for the admonition of the church.⁹⁹

The fact that a council was held in Theodosiopolis is also established by the evidence found in the Book of Canon Law where these canons are preserved.¹⁰⁰ It is very interesting to note that the Armenian sources present the council as a platform for Monophysitism to which the Emperor gave his full support. It is doubtful if the Iberian bishops and particularly the Emperor concurred with the Armenian bishops in anathematizing the Dyophysite doctrine of Chalcedon. Could it be that a later hand rewrote the history to suit the wishes of the then authorities at that time? We have already seen cases where the Armenian historians have done some retouching, presenting events in a more congenial manner to the trends of their time. However, it is indubitable that such a council was held. After establishing a military and political precedence over the three lands, the Emperor felt that a church union would further enhance this hegemony and help him to fight the Caliphate in the east. At this council, as at the council in Dvin of A. D. 653 – under Emperor Constans II and Nersēs III all the churchmen present, including the Catholicos, conformed to the will of the Emperor and a provisional formula was agreed upon. This was to be a preliminary step leading to a bigger and more ostentatious council that was to be held the following year in Constantinople.¹⁰¹

P. Peeters finds a parallel in the circumstances and election to the patriarchal throne of Sahak III and Nersēs III. Except for the fact that both of the pontiffs were from the northern provinces of Armenia – Jorop'or in Gugark' and Tayk' – and from a similar background, he overstretches the historical data to establish his view.¹⁰² However, it is interesting to point out that the parallelism lies not in the circumstances and election of the two pontiffs but in the fact that later they both first conformed to the will of the Emperor and then towards the end of their lives had to make a *volte-face* to save Armenia from even more tragic catastrophes.¹⁰³ Firstly, in both cases Armenia was reoccupied by Byzantine armies after a span of Arab control; secondly, it was the Emperors who

⁹⁹ Grigor Tat'ewac'i, *Girk' Harc'manc'* (Constantinople, 1729), p. 544.

¹⁰⁰ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, pp. 148 sq.; cf. Ormanean, vol. I, col. 519.

¹⁰¹ Diegesis, §§ 144-150, in Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 46 sq., 350-356.

¹⁰² Peeters, "Socrate", pp. 666 sq.

¹⁰³ See *supra*, pp. 134 sq.; and *infra*, pp. 222-229.

convoked the councils and compelled the Armenian clergy to unite with the Byzantine Church, and under the threat of Byzantine arms the Catholicos had no choice but to conform; thirdly, in any case, both of the patriarchs had Byzantinophile sympathies due to their background and the regions that they came from; and finally, in both instances the unions were ephemeral and had no lasting consequence. However, there are two outstanding differences: firstly, Emperor Constans II was a staunch Monothelete and therefore a union on that ground was more agreeable to the Armenians than under Emperor Justinian II, who was a Dyothelete; and secondly, the council and union of A. D. 653 was in opposition to and in disregard of the will of the prince of Armenia, while the union of A. D. 689 was in accordance with and under the blessing of the prince of Armenia. Thus the union of A. D. 689 serves as an indication of the cooperation between the Church and State during the rule of Nersēh Kamsarakan.

After the preliminary council of Karin, Justinian took the Catholicos and a number of bishops with him to Constantinople to finalize and establish once and for all the union of the two churches. According to the *Diegesis*, the Emperor in his fifth year invited the Catholicos and his bishops to Constantinople:

ἤνωσεν αὐτοὺς τοῖς ὁμολογοῦσι τὰς δύο φύσεις
 ...He united them with those who confessed the two
 τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, τῆς θεότητος καὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπό-
 natures of our Lord and God, the divine and the human,
 τητος, ἐν μιᾷ ὑποστάσει ἀφύρτως
 in one person (*hypostasis*), without confusion [and]
 ὀδαιρέτως καὶ ἐγγράφως ὥμοσαν μηκέτι
 separation: and they swore in writing no longer to
 ἀντιλογῆσαι
 maintain the contrary.¹⁰⁴

This union, however, is not reported by the Armenian historians; only Asoḻik records that the Emperor took the Catholicos and five bishops with him to Constantinople as hostages.¹⁰⁵ Could it be again that the Armenian historians, writing at a time when Monophysitism was the established doctrine of the land, tried to efface all signs of submission to the Byzantine church, and thus ignored

¹⁰⁴ *Diegesis*, §144, Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 46 sq. On the union of Catholicos Sahak III and Emperor Justinian II, see Tournebize, *Histoire*, pp. 368 sq.; Laurent, *Arménie*, p. 137, n. 3, 204; Bréhier, "Les derniers Héraclides", *HE*, vol. V, pp. 203; Tēr-Mikelian, *Kirche*, p. 72; Peeters, "Socrate", pp. 670 sqq.

¹⁰⁵ See *supra*, p. 175, n. 86.

the union completely?¹⁰⁶ Yet it is significant to note that only five bishops went to Constantinople, along with the Catholicos, to make the union. Why did not more go, for surely the Emperor would have liked a more impressive number than five? We have already indicated that most of the Monophysite bishops could not oppose the union, so they abstained, seeing the unilateral nature of the council, for it was the Emperor who “united them with those who confessed the two natures”.

F – Note on the Penetration of Chalcedonianism in the Armenian Church

Beginning with A. D. 572, for over a century, the Byzantine Church, aided by the military and political might of the Empire, tried on a number of occasions to bring about a union between the Armenian and Byzantine churches. The moving force behind these attempts of union was as much political and military as ecclesiastical. The Byzantine Emperors wanted to enforce a uniformity of doctrine in the Empire, and in Armenia, to be able to check the Sassanian and later the Arab threat. This resulted in a situation where union with the Byzantine Church meant the destruction of the Armenian Church with all her local colouring, traditions and characteristics. The Armenians had a choice of submission to the Emperor’s will and the destruction of their peculiar socio-political structure or schism that meant rebellion. And since the moving force behind the attempted union was political as well as ecclesiastical, the rejection on the part of the Armenians took the form of a politico-ecclesiastical opposition. Thus rejection of the council of Chalcedon became the battle cry of Armenian nationalism in her attempt to resist Byzantinization and assimilation.¹⁰⁷

However, the steady pressure that the Byzantine administration brought to bear on the Armenians – especially at the time of Emperor Heraclius with his Ekthesis and Emperor Constans II with his Typos –, helped to spread Chalcedonianism in Armenia. The first evidence of this penetration was the fact that there was a Byzantinophile party in Armenia mainly led by the Church and by the Mamikoneans, joined by their relations the Kamsarakans. Second, during the seventh century Armenian church architecture underwent a significant change which is regarded by some scholars as a sign of the spread of Chalcedo-

¹⁰⁶ See Peeters, “Socrate”, pp. 670; cf. Garitte, *Narratio*, pp. 350-352; see also *supra*, pp. 92 sq., 185.

¹⁰⁷ Adontz, *Armenia*, p. 280, says, “The Council of Chalcedon marked the victory of the Church of Constantinople in 451... The negative attitude of the Armenians toward the council of Chalcedon derives from this fact. The schism came about on a basis of hierarchy and not over dogma, as implied by later sources.”

nianism in Armenia. This is the introduction of tri-apsidal windows behind the main altar.¹⁰⁸ The seventh-century churches with tri-apsidal windows are: St. Hrip'simē in Vałaršapat, where two of the windows were later blocked up; Bagawan in Bagrewand; Mren and Agrak in Širak; Sisvan in Siwnik'; Zoravar in Elıvard; the cathedrals of T'alın, St. Sarkis of Art'ik and Aruč (T'ališ) in Aragac'otn. A closer look on the map will show that these churches are located mainly in regions bordering the Byzantine Empire, in cantons belonging to princes who were under immediate Byzantine threat and at the time of Catholicoi who nursed Byzantinophile sympathies.

Thirdly, directly linked with the preceding point, in the Book of Letters there is a writing ascribed to Catholicos Yovhannes Ojnecti that reads:

These are the Catholicoi of Armenia with the confession of the holy council of Dvin, who were established until Catholicos Ezr the Chalcedonian, whom the holy Church does not acknowledge; for this Szr received the pontificate by the command of Heraclius the King of the Romans, and he opposed the holy council of the Armenians, because he acquiesced in and accepted the council of Chalcedon; he divided from one another the conjoined nativity (of our Lord) and his baptism and he removed the 'who wast crucified' from the Trisagion. After him six Catholicoi were established until Elia, who was in their tradition.¹⁰⁹

Although the above quotation seems to be an over-statement, yet it is obvious that some of these pontiffs nurtured strong pro-Byzantine tendencies and under compulsion even subscribed to church unions. A cryptographic inscription partly in Greek and partly in abbreviation has come down to us from Catholicos Ezr (630/1-641). The inscription is from Avan dated circa A .D. 633 and reads thus:

ՏԷՐ ԵԶՐ ԶՈՒԿԶ ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿՈՍ
 Lord Ezr Catholicos of Armenia true
 ճշմարիտ
 ΔΩΛΩΣΤΩΘΕΩ Սամէլ ծուայ [ծառայ] Ք[րիստոսի]
 servant of God. Samēl servant of Christ.¹¹⁰

Also to be taken into account are the Greek inscriptions found in the basilica of Ereruk (fig. 111), the Church of Mastara (fig. 112), the Greek mono-

¹⁰⁸ A. Ereryan, "VII Darum Haykakan Hušarjanneri" P-BH (1966) no. 4, pp. 151-170.

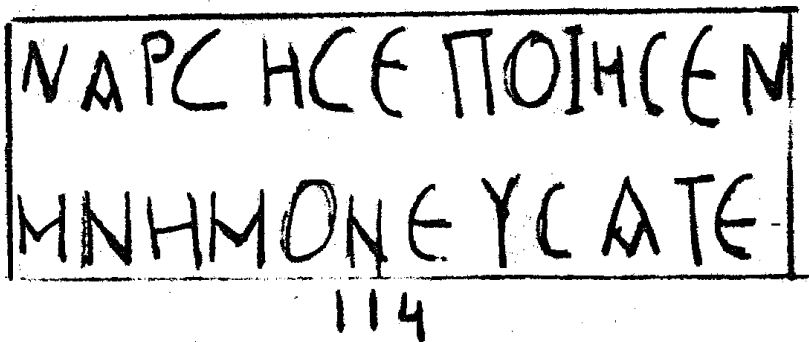
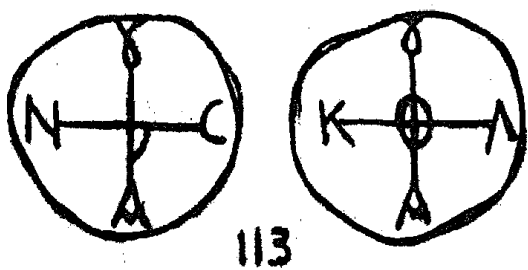
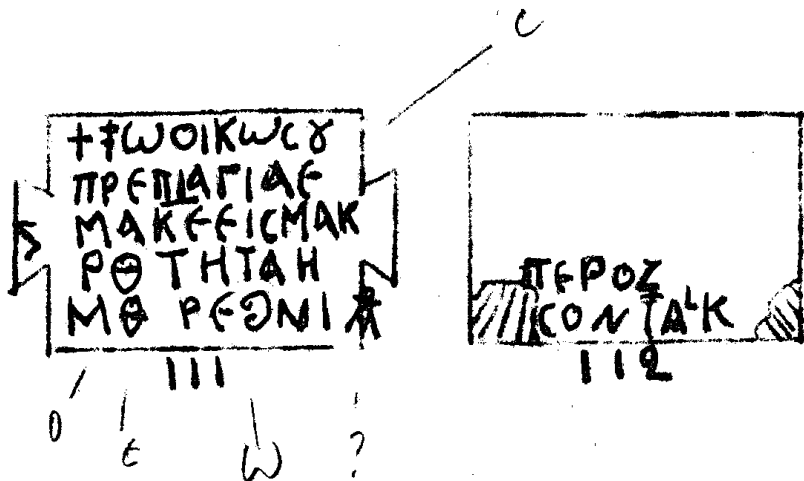
¹⁰⁹ "Saks Žolovoc' or Elen i Hayk'", BL, p. 222.

¹¹⁰ E. Muselyan, *Hatkanšakan C'uc'ak T'angaranayin Žolovacuneri* (Erevan, 1964), Fas. i, pp. 1, 49; the inscription was deciphered by K. Łafadaryan.

¹¹¹ See Strzygowski, vol. I, p. 31, fig. 32. [Τ]ῷ οἴκῳ Γου Πρέπει ἁγίασμα εἰς μακρότητα ἡμερῶν.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 31, fig. 33. ΠΕΡΟΖ CΟΝΤΑΚ

grams of catholicos Nersēs III on the capitals of Zuart’noc’ cathedral (fig. 113) and his Greek inscription (fig. 114): all these are evidence for the impact of Chalcedonianism on the Armenian Church.



¹¹³ Strzygowski transliterates as NAPCOY ΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΟΥ *ibid*, pp. 110, 116.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 30 sq. Ναρσῆς ἐποίησεν μνημονεύσατε.

Fourthly, as a result of the continuous contact with Byzantine life and thought a new literary style developed in Armenia, a style which was not characteristic of the fifth century literature, known as the *Yunaban Dproc'* (Hellenizing School) of Armenian literature.¹¹⁵ This school produced a number of translations of Greek works both philosophical and ecclesiastical in nature. We have already seen the translation of the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates by P'ilon of Tirak. The colophon continues by saying that eighteen years before P'ilon translated the above mentioned work,¹¹⁶ Abas (abbot?) Grigor Jorop'orec'i translated the biography of St. Silvester the bishop of Rome.¹¹⁷ Earlier, at the time of Hamazasp Mamikonean (656/ 7-661), Dawit' T'argman Tarawnec'i translated some of the treatises of St. Basil of Caesarea,¹¹⁸ and finally the Diegesis itself as the work of an Armenian Chalcedonian gives ample proof of the influence of Chalcedonianism in and through Armenian literary circles.

G – Conclusion

In appointing Grigor Mamikonean, what Mu^cāwiya did was to create a protectorate in Armenia, leaving the Armenians free to run their own internal administrative, religious and social affairs with a minimum amount of interference from the central government in Damascus. Thus the Armenians kept their internal autonomy and their national institutions; the Church and the *naxarars* were left in their former position and continued to enjoy tax exemption. This clearly was an attempt on Mu^cāwiya's part to neutralize, through peaceful means, the elements hostile to Arab domination in both Church and State.

During the long and prosperous principate of Grigor and the Caliphate of Mu^cāwiya for more than two decades, Armenia enjoyed peace and religious freedom on the basis of the treaties between T'ēodoros Ṛštuni and Mu^cāwiya, and Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah with the inhabitants of the different cities. Despite the stipulation of the second treaty forbidding the construction of edifices for Chris-

¹¹⁵ Y. Manandean, *Yunaban Dproc'* (Vienna, 1928), *passim*; M. Abełyan, *Erker* (Erevan, 1968), vol. III, pp. 108-131; G. Zarphanalean, *Matenadaran Haykakan T'argmanut'eanc'* (Venice, 1889), pp. 85-87, 111, 695 sq., 926 sq.

¹¹⁶ See *supra*, p. 177, n. 89.

¹¹⁷ I.e., in A. D. 678, see Yovsēp'ean, *Yišatakarank'* pp. 49-50; Tēr-Movsēsean, *Sokrat*, pp. XVII, LXXXV sq., 629.

¹¹⁸ Dashian, *Catalog*, vol. I, p. 550 a; Yovsēp'ean, *Yišatakarank'*, pp. 47-48; Zarphanalean, *Matenadaran*, p. 329; idem, *Dprut'iwn*, p. 455; H. Ačaṙyan, *Anjnanunner*, vol. II, p. 27.

tian devotion, the religious tolerance of Mu^cāwiya made it possible for the Armenians to build new churches and monasteries, to continue their worship services in an unimpeded manner, and moreover, carry on a certain degree of missionary activity.

Internally, Church-State relations were on a positive footing. As a result of the efforts of Catholicos Nersēs III, the Church had been able to establish her rightful place in the feudal structure and a degree of independence of action. The Catholicos carried on his own building activity and his own training programme, and ran the benevolent institutions of the church. Furthermore, the Catholicos was greatly respected by all the feudal lords and even the princes of Armenia and Albania honoured him. On the other hand, Grigor Mamikonean took personal interest in the well-being of the Church and gave her full assistance, thus creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation.

Ašot Bagratuni followed the footsteps of his predecessor. During his rule Armenia enjoyed a short span of independence because the Arabs were busy fighting a longdrawn civil war and the Emperor had turned his attention to the west. But he soon died of wounds received in a skirmish and with his death Armenia passed under Byzantine suzerainty. Under Nersēh Kamsarakan the semblance of cooperation continued but there was a strong undercurrent of opposition to his policy of concord with the Byzantine Empire.

From our discussions in chapters I and II we have seen that Church-State relations in Armenia was not an ellipse with two foci, the Catholicos and the ecclesiastical hierarchy occupying one centre with the feudal nobility and the prince of Armenia at their head the other, but that it was a triangular relationship with the third point rotating between the Byzantine Empire and the Arab Caliphate. Every time that one of the two super-powers had the upper hand in Armenia she tried to interfere in the affairs of the Church. This interference on the part of the Byzantine Empire took the form of attempted church unions, of which we have seen five in number; and on the part of the Caliphate, efforts to isolate the Armenian Church from the Imperial Church in the hope that by so doing they would check the spread of the influence of the Byzantine Empire and thus reduce the danger of rebellion in Armenia.

Again from the discussions of the first two chapters we can see that in Church-State relations, on the internal front, the dominant partner was the State. Catholicos Ezr had to form a church union because Mžež Gnuni had so desired; Catholicos Nersēs III took refuge in his native village of Išxan because T'ēodoros was greatly annoyed with him; and many of the anti-Chalcedonian clergy had either to conform or keep quiet during the rule of Nersēh Kamsarakan.

Finally, as a result of the religious policy pursued by the Byzantine Empire for over a century, and despite the fact that ancient Armenian national historians have tried to cover it up and despite the attempt of some modern church historians to deny it, Chalcedonianism steadily spread in Armenia, especially in the northern and western cantons.

CHAPTER III

CALIPH °ABD AL-MALIK AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

After the defeat of Muṣʿab ibn al-Zubayr at Dayr al-Jāthliq in Jumadā I 72/October 691 and the localization of the threat of the anti-caliph °Abdallāh ibn al-Zubayr within the bounds of al-Ḥijāz, °Abd al-Malik was ready to meet the Byzantine threat. The following year (73/692-693) he appointed his brother, Muhammad ibn Marwān, governor of al-Jazīrah and Armenia, an office which also involved the responsibility of continuing the fight against the Byzantine Empire. In the same year Emperor Justinian II suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Arabs near Sebastopolis in Cilicia as a result of the defection of the Slav contingents in his army.¹ In the meantime another Arab force under the command of °Uthmān ibn al-Walīd defeated a second Byzantine army on the borders of Armenia.² These defeats undoubtedly had their repercussions in Armenia. According to Theophanes, Sabbatios (Smbat Bagratuni), the patrician of Armenia, upon hearing the news of the Byzantine defeat submitted to the Arabs.³

The fact that Smbat Bagratuni succeeded Nersēh Kamsarakan to the office of Prince of Armenia is well attested by the Armenian and Byzantine historians;⁴ what still remains obscure is the question why and when he succeeded, and what happened to his predecessor. Nersēh was still alive and was the chief of the Kamsarakan dynasty circa A. D. 695/6, a fact which we can deduce from the evidence of the colophon of the shorter version of the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates.⁵ It could well be that events within the Caliphate had important

¹ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6184, p. 366; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 470; Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 104; Wellhausen, "Die Kämpfe", p. 431 sq.; Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 131.

² Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 853.

³ Theophanes, A. M. 6185, p. 366.

⁴ According to Lewond, p. 19, he was the son of Varaztiroc'; Drasxanakerte'i, pp. 93 sq. says the son of Smbat; while Asoḫik, p. 101, calls him Smbat Bagratuni Biwratean, and on p. 123, the son of Ašot. For the genealogy of Smbat see Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 438, 443-450; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 341.

⁵ See *supra*, p. 177, n. 90.

bearing upon events in Armenia; the more ^cAbd al-Malik consolidated his hold inside the war-torn Caliphate, the more Nersēh Kamsarakan lost his authority in Armenia until Smbat Bagratuni assumed the office of Prince of Armenia in A. D. 692, and forthwith passed to the Arab side upon learning of the Byzantine defeats. The fact of Smbat's defection is further corroborated by the testimony of the Diegesis⁶ and by what Lewond says:

The King of the Greeks called Ap'semeros,⁷ who succeeded Emperor Yustinianos, again dispatched an army and ordered (them) to seize Smbat, the son of Varaztiroc', because, in order to take vengeance for the death of his father Varaztiroc', whom the Greeks (*Hořomk'*) put to death, he had mutilated some of the Byzantine soldiers.⁸

The Arab historians, however, have nothing about the submission of Smbat Bagratuni just as they have nothing about the submission of T'ēodoros Rštuni some four decades earlier. According to the Arab sources, Caliph ^cAbd al-Malik appointed his brother Muḥammad ibn Marwān governor of al-Jazīrah and Armenia in 73/692-693, and the latter in the same year undertook a military expedition into Armenia because its people had rebelled and thrown off their allegiance.⁹ Muḥammad could not have invaded Armenia before dealing in a satisfactory manner with the Byzantine threat to northern Syria; he was busy fighting Emperor Justinian II in Cilicia – Sebastopolis and Mar^cash – and on the borders of Armenia.¹⁰ The testimony of the Arab historians should be understood in the light of what the Armenian and Byzantine historians say, viz., Armenia was subject to the Caliphate at the time as a result of voluntary submission.

Despite the reality of the submission, it is obvious to a discerning eye that the new Caliph, who had just defeated all his rivals, checked the Byzantine

⁶ See *infra*, pp. 201 sq.

⁷ Tiberius II Apsimar (698-705). Here Lewond's chronology is confused: Justinian II was succeeded by Leontius (695-698) and then came Tiberius II.

⁸ Lewond, p. 19.

⁹ Ya^cqūbi, vol. II, pp. 324 sq. and Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, p. 294 both give the date of Muḥammad's first coming to Armenia as 73/692-693; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 205 gives no date; *idem*, *Ansāb*, vol. V, p. 186 says in 75/694-695; while Ibn Khayyāt, vol. I, p. 288 gives the date as 82/Feb. 701-Feb. 702. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6187, p. 368 puts it in the tenth year of Justinian II (A. D. 695); Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 104, in 1010/699; Kałankatuacti, p. 257, trans. p. 207, puts it in A. E. 146/697-698. Lewond, p. 20 and Asoḥik, p. 123, both put it in the 16th year of ^cAbd al-Malik (A. D. 701).

¹⁰ Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 863; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 336 sq.; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 188; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, pp. 366 sqq.; Wellhausen, "Die Kämpfe", pp. 431 sq.

threat upon his flank and consolidated his hold within the Caliphate by the might of his arms, could not rest content with the situation in Armenia. ^cAbd al-Malik did not like the autonomy granted to the Armenians which gave them the chance to change their loyalty from one sovereign to the other according to the exigencies of the hour. He wanted to put an end to this autonomy and bring the land under firm Arab control. For this reason he sent his brother Muḥammad ibn Marwān to Armenia in 77/696-7 to re-establish the Arab hegemony once and for all over Armenia, Albania and Iberia. To be able to do this ^cAbd al-Malik had to destroy the *naxarar* system. But before going into the details of the manner in which he tried to bring Caucasia under firm Arab control and effects of this on Church-State relations in Armenia, we must say something about the administrative reforms and the Arabizing policy ^cAbd al-Malik initiated which, in the long run, resulted in the total de-Byzantinization and isolation of the Armenian Church from the west, and brought her closer to the Syrian Jacobite Church.

For over half a century under the Sufyanids, Byzantine and Sassanian administrative practices, registers of taxation (*Dīwān al-Kharāj*), coinage, language and personnel continued unchanged.¹¹ Most probably some Arabic was used, but the official language of the *Dīwāns* varied according to each province: in Syria it was Greek, in Egypt Coptic, in Iraq Persian and probably in Armenia Armenian. ^cAbd al-Malik wanted to put an end to all of this and Arabize the Caliphate completely; however, this Arabization could not have been brought about overnight. Al-Hajjāj, ^cAbd al-Malik's viceroy in Iraq, was the first to Arabize the *Dīwāns* of Mesopotamia around 78/697, four years later ^cAbd al-Malik himself did the same in Syria, while the *Dīwāns* of Egypt and Khurasān were Arabized at the time of his successor. Similarly, the coinage and weights were Arabized. The old Sassanian silver *dirhams* that were in circulation in the east, with the head of Chosroes II or Yazdkart III on one side, and the fire-altar with the attendants on the other, were replaced by Arab types; and the Byzantine *dinars* with the figure of Heraclius and his sons were replaced by those with the figure of the standing Caliph and after 77/696-7 by purely epigraphic *dinars*.¹²

¹¹ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 193, 300 sq.; Qaltashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A^cshā* (Cairo, 1331 /1913), vol. I, p. 423; Māwardī, pp. 349 sq.

¹² Balādhurī, *ibid*, pp. 240, 465 sqq.; Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 939; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, pp. 337 sq.; Ibn Ādam, p. 52; Mawardī, "Adnotationes", pp. 25 sq.; Yāqūt, Buldān, vol. IV, p. 886. The Armenian chronographer Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 66 (died, ca. 1291), says some time after A. D. 690 the Arabs minted epigraphic *dahekans*. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 473, gives the date as 1008/697. See also the comprehensive article of H. Sauvaire, "Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire

The defection of Smbat Bagratuni marks the total defeat of the Byzantinophile party in Armenia under the leadership of Catholicos Sahak III and prince Nersēh Kamsarakan. This is further corroborated by the evidence found in the Diegesis that when Catholicos Sahak III and the five bishops returned from Constantinople after the church union, those of the ecclesiastical dignitaries who had remained behind were not willing to accept their authority because they were of one mind with the Emperor and had accepted the council of Chalcedon. They said, "If you do not turn and anathematize them, we do not receive you into our country. "Then the author of the Diegesis continues:

Αὐτοὶ δὲ ἀγαπήσαντες τὴν δόξαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἢ τὴν
 And they, loving the praise of men (more) than the
 δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ... ἀνεθεμάτισαν πρῶτον ἑαυτοὺς ὡς
 glory of God, ... anathematized first themselves as
 Κοινωνήσαντας τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις, εἶτα τοὺς
 having had communion with the Romans, (and) then the
 Ῥωμαίους, καὶ ὥφθησαν ἀνίατι ἐπὶ ταῖς
 Romans, and were seen to be incorrigible in their
 Κακίαις αὐτῶν.
 wrongdoings.¹³

It appears as though the rise of the pro-Arab or Pro-Byzantine party to power in Armenia depended on the ascendancy of the one empire over the other in the politico-military arena of the Near East. Thus, as soon as the power and authority of Byzantium waned, correlatively her supporters lost ground within Armenia.

A – The Policy of Arabization in Armenia

Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik's Arabizing policy in Armenia took two specific forms: firstly, the central administration in Damascus wanted to put an end to

de la numismatique et de la métrologie musulmanes", in JA, 7th series (1879-1882), vols. XIV, pp. 455-533; XV, pp. 228-277; XVIII, pp. 499-516; XIX, pp. 23-77, 97-163, 281-327; J. Walker's two volumes, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian Coins* (London, 1941), *passim*; and *A Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and Post-Reform Umayyad Coins* (London, 1956); and Ph. Grierson, "The Monetary Reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik", JESHO, vol. III (1960), pp. 241-264. We see that the first "Reformed" *dirhams* were minted in Armenia Dvin in 81/700, Walker, *Arab-Sassanian Coins*, pp. cxxxv, cxl.

¹³ Garitte, *Narratio*, §§ 146-147, p. 47.

the internal autonomy of the land by destroying the *naxarar* system their fortresses and their cavalry – and by appointing for the first time an Arab governor. Secondly, the Arabs wanted to de-Byzantinize Armenia by isolating the Armenian feudal nobility and the ecclesiastical hierarchy from the Byzantine court and the Imperial Church. The orientation of the leading circles in Armenia had been romanophile and hitherto Chalcedonianism had gained substantial ground among the higher clergy.

^cAbd al-Malik saw the *naxarar* system as being a menace to his authority in the country. He did not like the existence of feudal princes with their militia and fortresses wherein no Arab officer could be quartered, according to the stipulation of the treaty of Mu^cāwiya and T'ēodoros. These were all potentially dangerous centres of national power and Armenia could not be effectively brought under complete Arab control so long as these pockets of national power existed. The destruction of these centres of resistance took two forms, military and economic.

After him [i. e., Grigor Mamikonean] Smbat Bagratuni, the son of Smbat, inherited the office of Prince of Armenia; at this time a certain Mruan of Ismayelite family was sent as *ostikan* over Armenia. He waged war against all the fortresses of Armenia, and those which he seized, he generally destroyed and razed to the ground. But the island of Sewan which is in the lake of Gezan, although there at the beginning, did not let itself be taken by him; however, after two years it was delivered into his hands. Those who were dwelling there in the fortress he carried off captive, and gave the place up to plunder and destroyed the fortress completely.¹⁴

Thus, for over two years Muḥammad went about the land killing princes and their militia, putting many nobles in fetters and destroying their fortresses. Moreover, to deprive them of their economic means he plundered their belongings and expropriated their estates; and finally, he delivered up their wives and children into slavery.

Muḥammad did not bury the hatchet in his dealings with the Church. He wanted to weaken economically and hence politically not only the *naxarars* but the ecclesiastical establishment as well. He therefore resorted to the same harsh methods in his dealings with the Church as with the *naxarars*, viz., plunder, destruction and killing. According to Lewond, after the devastation of the fortress of Sewan, seeing the prosperity of the monastery of Saint Gregory,¹⁵ a

¹⁴ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 93 sq. Cf. Asolik, p. 123; Vardan, p. 71; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 85. Kalkatuac'i, p. 257; gives the duration of the siege as three years.

¹⁵ Lewond, pp. 20 sqq. The monastery was in Bagwan in the canton of Bagrewand in the canton of Bagrewand. On Bagwan see Ališan, *Ayrarat*, pp. 527-535.

wealth that had steadily grown through the years, Muḥammad could not resist the temptation of giving over the place to plunder. After a detailed description of the monastery and the monks, Lewond goes on to narrate laboriously how the Arabs went about sacking the place. An Arab army corps betook itself to the monastery for a few days. At night they strangled one of their servants and threw his corpse in a ditch near the convent. They then accused the monks of the crime and after an extensive search recovered the body from the place where they had thrown it. Then Muḥammad ordered forty monks to be put to death. Lewond concludes by saying:

Now who is able to remember, without pouring out torrents of tears, the impossible calamities that happened unto them; for the holy church was despoiled of the ornaments of the sanctuary and the voice of sacred exaltation was silent; along with the same, the spiritual and rational celebration of the liturgies, that the saints offered with all their heart to Him who alone is pure, ceased. The brightness of its lamps, by which the night was rendered brilliant as the day, were dimmed also. The fragrant smell of the incense and the prayers of priests, by which they offered the exaltation of the people to the creator (in another Msc. which they offered for the expiation...), and sought reconciliation from the benevolent God, ceased likewise. And in a word, the altar of the Lord was stripped of all its magnificent utensils. Oh, the long suffering of Christ! ¹⁶

The story as told by Lewond, repeated by Asolik and echoed by other later Armenian historians, seems to be somewhat exaggerated. With the lapse of eight decades, from the time of the catastrophe to the time when it was set down in writing, the wealth of the monastery had acquired legendary proportions. If it was true that the monastery was as well endowed as the sources record, then most probably the Arabs would have ransacked the place during the period of occupation when they carried out at least three major incursions. Moreover the martyrdom of such a large number, when forty monks lost their lives at the hands of Muslims, should have appeared in the Armenian Martyrology or the ecclesiastical calendar – we do not come across such an incident. Finally, Muḥammad did not need to create a pretext to plunder the monastery; he could have plundered the place outright without going to the trouble of killing one of his servants, and throwing his corpse in a ditch and then recovering it. There is no doubt that the monastery was plundered and that a number

¹⁶ Lewond, pp. 21 sq. Cf. Asolik, p. 123; Vardan, p. 71. Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 108 sq. records the incident as having taken place at the time of Yazīd ibn Mazyad during Hārūn al-Rashīd's Caliphate. Lewond's dating is preferable.

of monks were killed, but whether they were over forty in number is open to debate.¹⁷

The plunder and destruction of the monastery, however, and the killing of a number of monks, along with the repressive measures that Muḥammad ibn Marwān embarked upon – during his two years long invasion of the land – should be seen in the double light of the new policy of Arabization within the Caliphate, and particularly, in the framework of the tribal-political organization of the Arab Islamic Empire. As a reprisal for the rebellion of the Armenians after the death of Mu^cāwiya, and as a punishment for the treachery of the Armenian ecclesiastical hierarchy in uniting with the Imperial Church, Muḥammad set out to chastise the people – without discriminating between Church or State – by killing, plundering and carrying off captive. Thus the plunder of the monastery of Saint Gregory was more an act of a political nature rather than the signal of an impending religious persecution. We shall see subsequently that there was no change in the basic religious principles of the Caliphate apart from the fact that it became less tolerant towards the national institutions of Armenia.

After having thoroughly pacified Armenia, Muḥammad returned to Damascus laden with much booty and many prisoners around A. D. 700. He appointed as his deputy (as governor of Armenia)¹⁸ a certain ^cAbdallah, Abū

¹⁷ A glance through the Armenian Synaxarion and, equally, through the Byzantine Synaxarion shows that most of the group martyrdoms recorded are forty in number. I presume 'forty' like 'seven' has a special meaning which goes back to Biblical traditions of 'four hundred years', 'forty years', 'forty days', etc.; probably it would be better not to take the number literally.

¹⁸ Lewond, p. 23 and Asoḻik, p. 123, both say Muḥammad appointed an Arab as his lieutenant without giving his name. Drasxanakertc'i, p. 94 and Vardan, p. 71, give his name as Abdallah or Abdla. Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 325, says Muḥammad remained in Armenia until his death; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, p. 382 says in the year 82/February 701-February 702 Muḥammad appointed Abū Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah over Armenia but the people betrayed him and killed him the same year or the following year 83/702-703, finally, Ibn Khayyāt, vol. I, pp. 288 sqq. says, in 82/701-702 Muḥammad appointed Nabīḥ ibn-^cAbdallah al-Ghazī, but the Armenians killed him so that in the following year he invaded Armenia again for a second time and appointed two *Cāmils*, Abū Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah al-Ghanawī and ^cAmr ibn al-Ṣadī al-Ghanawī, and both of them were killed by the people of Armenia. It is interesting to note that E. de Zambaur, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de l'Islam* (Hanovre, 1927), p. 178 does not give the names of any of the lieutenants of Muḥammad over Armenia, while Ghazarian, pp. 39, 44 mentions Abdla without identifying who he was. The Abdallah of the Armenian historians could be Abū Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah of Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn al-Khayyāt, who was most probably killed at the battle of Vardanakert, see *infra*, pp. 216 sqq.

Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah al-Ghanawī. Muḥammad subjugated the land so ruthlessly that those who survived called blessed those who had departed from this world in peace.¹⁹

B – *Abū Shaykh Ibn ^cAbdallah and his Policy in Armenia*

The new governor followed closely in the footsteps of his master Muḥammad. He enforced even more vigorously the Arabizing policy of ^cAbd al-Malik. According to John Catholicos he was

an impudent, wicked and insolent man and above all malevolent; who had duplicity as the venom of a serpent nestled in himself, and he tortured with fetters of imprisonment the princes and nobles of this our land of Armenia and plundered the wealth and possessions of many.²⁰

Lewond goes even further by adding that he “conceived an evil design to destroy the corps of the noble families... together with their cavalry.”²¹ In this manner Abū Shaykh tried to dismantle, once and for all, the political, economic and military foundations of the bastion – *naxararut’iwnk’* – of national existence in Armenia.

He treated the Church likewise, for we read, “He generally left all the churches of Christ stripped of all their ornaments”²² destroyed and desecrated the holy temples, and in place of the divine liturgy brought mourning and lamentation to both young and old. Besides all this, “Then he also gave the great Sahak to be taken to Damascus in fetters and, with the same, the prince of Armenia, Smbat the son of Smbat.”²³ It is of great interest for us to note that Abū Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah sent Catholicos Sahak together with Smbat Bagratuni and other *naxars* to Damascus as a hostage. It is still more interesting, however, to note that the Armenian historians say nothing as to why the Catholicos was deported. What need had he to deport Sahak, a clergyman with no military resources, unless he saw some real danger to Arab domination?

It seems as though this act was the direct consequence of two things: firstly, the Catholicos was one of the two leaders of the Byzantinophile party in

¹⁹ Lewond, p. 22.

²⁰ Drasxanakerc’i, p. 94. Cf. Asoḡik, pp. 101, 123.

²¹ P.23. Cf. Drasxanakerc’i, p. 94; Vardan, p. 71.

²² Drasxanakerc’i, p. 94.

²³ Lewond makes no mention of the deportation at all. Asoḡik, p. 101, says only Sahak was still in Damascus as a hostage. Smbat, however, never reached Damascus and next we find him back in Armenia organizing an uprising against the Caliphate which leads us to conclude that on the way, somehow, he managed to escape.

Armenia (the other being Nersēh Kamsarakan, the former prince of Armenia). Secondly, the ecclesiastical union that Sahak had concluded with the Byzantine Church, was an act of public collaboration with the Byzantine government to which the authorities in Damascus could not have remained indifferent.

It is obvious that the Arab Caliphate could not tolerate the spread of Chalcedonianism in a land under its control, not because the Arabs particularly cared for Monophysitism or Dyophysitism as theological doctrines but because they were afraid of the cultural and political penetration of the Byzantine Empire, under the guise of religion, which in the long run could lead to extremely embarrassing military situations in Armenia. The deportation of the Catholicos, therefore, should be seen again not as an act of religious nature, but as part of a political-administrative policy with far reaching military and strategic implications. What Mu^cāwiya had failed to achieve through peaceful means – viz., the isolation of Armenia from the Byzantine Empire and its total subjugation to the Arab yoke – ^cAbd al-Malik tried to realize by the application of naked force.

Finally, to consummate his policies in Armenia Abū Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah put to death Dawit' Dvneç'i. We have already seen how Dawit', also known as Surhan, became a Christian during the principate of Grigor Mamikonean and Catholicos Anastas Agorec'i, circa A. D. 665.²⁴ Though at the time of his conversion the whole affair was hushed up by Mu^cāwiya and his administration, the times had changed, the Caliphate had passed through the test of fire, and the new Caliph with his policy of Arabization could hardly overlook such a flagrant breach of Islamic Law. Abū Shaykh cast Dawit' in prison and tried to win him over by promises and threats. But all his attempts to induce him to give up his Christian faith through peaceful means were ineffective. Dawit' remained steadfast in his belief and fearlessly defended his Saviour. Ibn ^cAbdallah finally had him crucified and they pierced his heart with a lance. "Dawit', the holy martyr of Christ, died on Monday, twenty-third of Areg, at the sixth hour." [4 April 70].²⁵

The martyrdom of Dawit' is often cited by many contemporary historians as an undeniable sign of change in the religious policy of the Caliphate towards

²⁴ See *supra*, pp.153 sq.

²⁵ Awgorean, *Vark'*, vol. VI, p. 228 gives the date as Easter Monday, 31 March 693. The manuscript Menologium Ms. Marsh no. 438, vol. II, fol. 388b gives it as Monday 22 Areg, A. H. 76/695-696, the Armenian Synaxarion of Tēr Israyēl, PO, vol. XXI, pp. 225 sq., only says on 23rd of Areg without giving the year. Dulaurier, *Recherche*, p. 183, n. 2, puts the date as 31 March 693. Ormanean vol. I, col. 525 gives the date as Easter Monday, 4 April 701. Ormanean's dating seems to be the most acceptable, for if Muḥammad came to Armenia in A. D. 697 and stayed for more than two years, then Dawit' could not have died in A. D. 693 or 695/6.

the Armenian Church. Before going into the discussion of the matter it is necessary to look at the whole issue from the point of view of the Muslim religion and the Arab Caliphate. In the Qur'ān there is no specific punishment (*ḥadd*) prescribed for apostasy (*ridḍa*) in this world. The apostate (*murtadd*) is threatened with punishment in the world to come because it is a crime against the law of God:

Whoso disbelieveth in Allah after his belief – save him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with Faith – but whoso findeth ease in disbelief: On them is wrath from Allah. Theirs will be an awful doom. Assuredly in the Hereafter they are the losers.²⁶

In the tradition (*ḥadīth*), however, the picture is totally different. All the traditionists agree that the apostate should be put to death. There are traditions attributed to Muḥammad which state that an apostate must be slain.²⁷

According to Abū Yūsuf:

From apostates, Arab or non-Arab, no *jizya* is collected, as only accepting Islām or death is offered to them and to the nomadic Arab pagan... Male pagans or apostates who do not repent cannot be taken prisoner nor allowed to pay *jizya*. If they do not accept Islām they are killed, their children taken prisoner and their properties divided amongst the Muslims present at the battle after deducting the 'Fifth'.²⁸

Reading the story thus far and taking it at its face value one would agree that the martyrdom of Dawit' Dvnecti symbolizes the reversal of the earlier Arab religious policy in Armenia. The story, however, does not end there; as soon as Dawit' died, bishop Sargis or Sargsak of Amatunik', Muṣeḥ Mamikonean (the *Sparapet* of Armenia), and his brother Artawazd came to the place of the execution and approached the governor seeking the body of the great martyr in Christ to be buried in the rites of their religion. Ibn 'Abdallah granted them their request and, according to the Armenian sources, a grand

²⁶ Qur'ān, xvi 106, 109. See also iii 86-91; iv 90-91, 137-138; ix 66-69. Most of the standard commentators on iv 90-91 regard it as an injunction for killing the apostate, see S. Zwemer, *Law of Apostasy in Islam* (London, 1924), pp. 33-54.

²⁷ Bukhārī, *Kitāb al-Jāmi' al-Sahīḥ*, ed. M. L. Krehl and Th. W. Juynboll (Leiden, 1908), vol. IV, "Kitāb al-dīyat" bāb 6, and "Kitāb al-Murtaddīn" bab 2, pp. 317, 329; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī (Cairo, 1373/1953), vol. II, pp. 847 sq.; Sarakhṣī, *Sharḥ al-Siyar al-Kabīr* (Ḥaydarabad, 1335/1917), vol. IV, pp. 162 sq. M. Khadduri, *The Islamic Law of Nations*, Shaybānī's *Siyar*, trans. with an introduction (Baltimore, 1966), pp. 195; *idem*, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, 1955), pp. 149-152.

²⁸ Abū Yūsuf, p. 67, trans. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. III, p. 92. Cf. Ibn Ādam, p. 12, trans. Ben Shemesh, *ibid*, vol. I, p. 30; Māwardī, p. 90.

funeral service was organized. Among the mourners were a great number of clergy²⁹ – including-bishops, priests and deacons – and many other princes, besides those mentioned above. Furthermore, Mušel Mamikonean bought the lance that the Arabs used to pierce the heart of the martyr, for twenty *tenars* (*dīmārs*), fashioned it into a cross and presented it to the church of Jag. The cross itself upon which Dawit' was hanged, was deposited in the church of Dvin.³⁰

The fact that the Armenian Church (in the absence of the Catholicos it could well be that bishop Sargis of Amatunik' was acting as *locum tenens*) and the Armenian nobles could approach the governor and ask him to allow the burial to be carried according to the rites of the Armenian Church, on the one hand; and the fact that such a public funeral of stately proportions could be held with no molestation from the Muslim authorities, on the other; coupled with the fact that Mušel Mamikonean bought the lance to be preserved as a relic and was permitted to put the cross on which Dawit' died in the church of Dvin; and finally, in the light of the aforesaid Islamic traditions (for Dawit' was an Arab Muslim called Surhan and in the eyes of the Arab administration he was nothing more than an apostate and an impostor), we cannot but conclude yet once again that there was no shift in the basic Arab religious policy in Armenia, but that the death of Dawit' was a legal-administrative act, no more than another manifestation of the general Arabizing and isolationist policy of Caliph ^cAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān.

C – *The Consequences of the New Arab Policy*

The oppressive measures of Muḥammad ibn Marwan and his lieutenant Abū Shaykh ibn ^cAbdallah could not extirpate the *naxarars* nor did it weaken the hold of the Church on Armenia. In the long run, however, the new Arab policy succeeded in isolating the Armenian Church from the Imperial Church and, as we shall see subsequently, forced the Catholicos to find a *modus vivendi* with the Arab Caliphate. These harsh methods, however, drove many of the Armenian princes into rebellion and exile.

The Caliphal plans of destroying the *naxararut'iwnk'* met with a strong rebuff. To forestall any further calamity, the *naxarars* took all the necessary defensive measures, using every opportunity to rise up in arms against the Arabs and killing the Arab officials who fell into their hands. We have already

²⁹ "V kayabanut'iwn Srpoyn Dawt'i", pp. 94 sq.; Drasxanakerc'i, p. 94; Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fol. 388b; Awgerean, *Vark'*, vol. VI, p. 228; Ališan, *Hayapatum* (Venice, 1901), p. 196.

³⁰ "V kayabanut'iwn Srboyn Dawt'i", p. 95; Awgerean, *ibid*, vol. VI, p. 229.

seen that Smbat Bagratuni, the prince of Armenia, somehow managed to escape on the way of exile to Damascus and returned to organize the resistance against Arab oppression. Aware of the malicious plans of the central administration, he called a secret meeting of the feudal princes and their cavalry in A. D. 703. To this meeting came his relative Smbat prince of Vaspurakan, Vard the son of T'ēodoros Ėštuni and his brother Ašot Bagratuni along with a number of other *naxarars*.³¹ They could muster together a force of two thousand cavalymen, too insignificant a number to be able to stand effectively against the Arabs. The *naxarars* decided to cross into Byzantine territory and seek Imperial assistance in their conflict. In military terms only, it would not have disturbed the Arabs to see a number of Armenians crossing to Byzantine territory, though they may have preferred to have the Armenians on their side. Mu^cāwiya had been a man of great political insight and he had tried to avoid this very thing by giving more advantageous terms to the Armenians. By exercising great caution he had wisely avoided any measures that would have driven the Armenians into the Byzantine camp. Mu^cāwiya had won his throne through shrewd diplomacy, while ^cAbd al-Malik by the might of his armies.

Smbat and his comrades-in-arms went along the river Erasx (Arax) and reached the great village of Akoti,³² at the foot of mount Ararat. The Arab garrison of Naxčawan pursued the fleeing Armenians with an army of five thousand, and according to other manuscripts eight thousand,³³ cavalry. Smbat Bagratuni tried to avoid a direct confrontation with the Arabs, realizing it could be disastrous for the Armenians, and he sent a message asking to negotiate with the Arabs for their safe passage to Byzantine territory, saying:

Why do you persist in pursuing us? What crime have we committed against you? Behold, our land is before you; we have given you our homes, our vineyards, our woods and our cultivated lands; why then do you seek our lives? Give us leave to depart from our borders.³⁴

The Arabs refused to listen to their supplication. When the negotiations failed the Armenians crossed the river, and moved to the nearby and strategically more advantageous village of Vardanakert³⁵ located on the left bank of Arax,

³¹ Lewond, p. 23; Vardan p. 71. Asolik, p. 123; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 94; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 85.

³² Akoti, a village in the canton of Maseac'otn, see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 395; Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 445; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, pp. 470-474.

³³ Lewond, p. 24, n. 3; Asolik, p. 123; Vardan, p. 71.

³⁴ Lewond, *ibid*.

³⁵ On the exact location of Vardanakert see Manandyan, *Čanaparhner*, pp. 26 sq.; Ghazarian, pp. 85 sq. n. 49; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 486.

and they fortified the place in preparation for the ensuing battle. The two armies met the following day early in the morning. The extremely cold Armenian winter came to the aid of her sons. The Arab soldiers who had spent all the night out in the cold were half frozen and could not fight. They suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of the Armenians; many were killed, others were drowned in the frozen river when the ice broke under the hoofs of their horses and even the commander was killed.³⁶

The victory of Vardanakert sent its echoes reverberating all through the land. At Gukank', in the canton of Ġštunik', a second Arab army was defeated by Smbat Bagratuni the son of Ašot prince of Vaspurakan.³⁷ And the people of Vanand, led by the Kamsarakan princes, were victorious over Okba and his army.³⁸ Smbat Bagratuni and his colleagues crossed to the Byzantine territory and sent presents to the Emperor from the booty they had captured, of Arabian horses and the noses of the killed Arab soldiers. The Emperor gave him the dignity of Kuropalate and, with his permission, they settled in the fortress of Tuxark' in the province of Tayk'.³⁹

It was necessary to discuss at length the whole battle of Vardanakert because it provides further substantial evidence of the fact that there was no change in the Arab religious policy towards the Armenian Church. The message of Smbat Bagratuni is very significant: the Armenians had left behind everything they possessed, all they were interested in was to free themselves. But it was exactly this very thing that the Arabs were unwilling to do – viz., to let the Armenians leave their lands, orchards and vineyards uncultivated and go to the enemy territory. We have already seen in the treaty of Mu^cāwiya with T'ēodoros Ġštuni that Mu^cāwiya did not distribute the cultivated lands of Armenia among the Arab warriors as booty, nor did he enslave the Armenian populace to be sold as captives, but gave them complete internal autonomy with the understanding that they would pay to the central treasury annually the "surplus".⁴⁰ In other words, the land of Armenia was to become a source of permanent income or continuous sustenance for the Muslim Arabs of the present and of the generations to come, while the inhabitants of the country were to be the labour force. We find that even before the conquest of Armenia the same was the case with ^cIrāq (al-Sawād). Caliph ^cUmar, following the

³⁶ On the battle of Vardanakert see Lewond, pp. 24 sq.; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 94; Asolik, pp. 123 sq.; Vardan, p. 71; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 85.

³⁷ Lewond, pp. 26 sq.

³⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 94; Asolik, p. 101.

³⁹ On T'uxark' see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 357, 360. Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, p. 373.

⁴⁰ See *supra*, pp. 114 sqq.

example of Muḥammad,⁴¹ did not want to distribute the lands of al-Sawād among the Arabs but left them in the hands of its owners as a perpetual source of income for the Caliphate.⁴² Whether in ʿIrāq or in Armenia, the land would not produce anything of itself without labourers and if the labourers were to produce, they needed to be treated accordingly. This is what ʿUmar had done in ʿIrāq and Muʿāwiya in Armenia; they treated the people well, thus winning the goodwill and cooperation of the local inhabitants.

Though ʿAbd al-Malik emerged victorious from the civil war, yet the coffers of the central government were empty and the economy was in a ruinous state. Moreover, no administrative machinery existed to ensure the regular collection of revenues from the provinces. During the turbulent days of the civil war, the inhabitants of the rural regions of Mesopotamia who had been converted to Islam began to flock into the cities. They abandoned their lands in order to escape the land-tax (*kharāj*) that had grown to excessive proportions. Al-Ḥajjāj; ibn Yūsuf, the viceroy of ʿAbd al-Malik over ʿIrāq and all the East, tried to stop this financially disastrous migration. He rounded up the fugitives from the cities, branded them with the name of the village of their origin, and sent them back to their birthplace to cultivate the land and pay the taxes.⁴³ Al-Ḥajjāj was not pleased with all of this because financially the Caliphate suffered greatly. By virtue of their being Muslims the new converts ceased from paying the poll-tax, though they continued to pay the *kharāj* on their lands. Yet even the loss of the poll-tax was financially ruinous for the administration. Hence, he went even a step further, and in defiance of all Islamic precepts he imposed on these newly converted non-Arab Muslims (*mawālī*) the poll-tax from which they were legally exempt by virtue of their conversion.⁴⁴ In other words, it was not religious motivation but basically financial and national considerations that

⁴¹ The capitulation of Khaybar, Māwardī, p. 303; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 23 sqq., Yahya ibn Ādam, pp. 19-25.

⁴² See Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 265 sq.; Māwardī, pp. 302 sq.; Abū Yūsuf, pp. 16-22, trans. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. III, pp. 94-100.

⁴³ Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 1122 sq., 1435; Balādhurī, *Anonyme arabische Chronik*, ed. W. Ahlwardt (Griefswald, 1883), pp. 336 sq.; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, *Kitāb al-ʿIqd al-Farīd* (Cairo, 1361/1946), vol. III, pp. 416 sq. Mubarrad, *al-Kitāb al-Kāmil*, ed. W. Wright (Leipzig, 1864), p. 286. Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, p. 252.

⁴⁴ Hitti, *History*, pp. 218 sq.; Cf. Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 243 sqq.; J. Périer, *Vie d'al-Ḥadjdjad ibn Yousef* (Paris, 1904), pp. 262 sq. Most probably the new converts, besides escaping the heavy land tax, also wanted to get enrolled in the army and thus to have their names registered in the *Dīwāns* to receive pensions like the Arabs. But Arabizing the Caliphate of necessity entailed the elimination of all the non-Arab elements from sharing in the resources of the Empire even if they had become Muslims. How much more so was the case with the non-Arab and non-Muslim elements!

led al-Ḥajjāj to pursue such a policy in Mesopotamia around the turn of the seventh century. Though we have no explicit evidence, yet it seems this was also true to a certain degree in Syria and Egypt.⁴⁵ The same was the case in Armenia. The Arabs were unwilling to let the Armenians leave their lands and cross to the Byzantine side not because they were prompted by military, political or religious considerations but solely out of economic exigencies; they needed to keep them on their lands to cultivate and pay the tribute.⁴⁶ Therefore, again we could assume that there was no change of Arab religious policy in Armenia at this time.

D - *Catholicos Sahak: the Statesman*

The above mentioned uprisings were ephemeral in their result, and they only contributed to the waning credibility of the *naxarars* and the internal administrative machinery of Armenia. The news of the defaulting vassals led ʿAbd al-Malik to send his brother, Muḥammad ibn Marwān,⁴⁷ a second time to Armenia with a bigger army. Muḥammad was threatening

to come and take vengeance upon Armenia on behalf of his defeated army; to set fire, demolish and destroy the churches of Armenia, and to take prisoner in general [all the people] and to give them as food to the merciless sword.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Dionysius of Tell-Mahré, p. 10 says, "L'an 1003 (691-692), ʿAbd el-Malik fit... paraître un édit sévère pour que chacun allât dans son pays, à son village d'origine, y faire inscrire son nom, le nom de son père, sa vigne, ses oliviers, ses biens, ses enfants et tout ce qu'il possédait." Cf. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 473 who puts it in 1009/698-699. For Egypt see C. H. Becker, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam* (Strassburg, 1903), heft. ii, pp. 98 sqq.; Périer, *Al-Ḥadjdjadj*, p. 263.

⁴⁶ It is obvious that not all of the two thousand fleeing people were *naxarars*; some were minor nobles, but there were a number of common people who had joined the ranks.

⁴⁷ Lewond, p. 28; Vardan, p. 71; and Asoḻik, p. 124 call the general Mahmet (Muḥammad); Drasxanakertc'i, p. 95; and Asoḻik, pp. 101 sq., call him Ogbay, who was earlier defeated by the Kamsarakans, see *supra*, p. 218, n. 38. Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 853 reports that a certain Arab general called ʿUthmān ibn al-Walīd was fighting against Byzantine forces in a district of Armenia in 73/692-693; probably it is the same man who (according to Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-ʿArab*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Cairo, 1962), p. 106, his full name was ʿUthman ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿUqbah ibn Abī Muʿayt) was appointed governor of Armenia. See also Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 205. On the other hand most of the Arab historians record that Muḥammad ibn Marwān came a second time to Armenia because the people had rebelled, see Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, pp. 382, 399, 411; Ibn Khayyāt, vol. I, p. 292, and this same thing is corroborated by some of the Armenian historians. It seems that Drasxanakertc'i is confused in identifying Muḥammad ibn Marwan with ʿUthman ibn al-Walīd ibn al-ʿUqbah ibn Abī Muʿayt.

⁴⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 95.

Those of the *naxarars* who had not fled the land, hearing the threats of Muḥammad, were greatly disturbed. The Byzantine government was in no position to help the Armenians; the throne of Tiberius II was insecure and was challenged by the deposed Emperor Justinian II with the help of the Bulgars.⁴⁹ The Armenian *naxarars* had no choice but to try and find a means of reconciliation with the Arabs and depend upon the tender mercies of Muḥammad.

At this critical juncture, when the civil and military leaders of the land had lost all hope, we see once again the Armenian Catholicos playing a pivotal role in shaping the political orientation of the nation, thus saving the people from unnecessary bloodshed and the land from ruthless devastation. The remaining *naxarars* in haste called a national council, attended both by the spiritual and temporal dignitaries of the land, and they asked Catholicos Sahak to mediate for them before Muḥammad. We saw earlier that the Catholicos was kept in Damascus as hostage.⁵⁰ He now took upon himself the weighty responsibility of, first, negotiating a new peace treaty with the Caliphate and, second, going to meet Muḥammad personally. In other words, the new Arab policy brought the Church and State closer to one another. The *naxarars* realized that if they were to ride this storm and the nation to survive, they should utilize all the available means at their command, but above all work together with the ecclesiastical authorities to minimize the danger.

The fact that Sahak was allowed to leave Damascus and proceed to meet the commander of the armies in Ḥarrān, could perhaps indicate that the Catholicos enjoyed a certain degree of honour in the place of his exile, that he was not treated like a common criminal, and furthermore, that he had been able to establish channels of communication with personalities in the higher echelons of the Caliphal administration. It is doubtful if Sahak could leave Damascus without the agreement of the Caliph, and especially without his knowing the reason behind it; so that it would not be far-fetched to assume that the Catholicos undertook his negotiations in Damascus and came to Ḥarrān with the terms already negotiated in Damascus, which he presented to Muḥammad in the form of a letter. Leaving out all the miraculous details, it appears that upon arriving in Ḥarrān Sahak was taken ill and soon died. Before his death, however, he wrote a letter addressed to Muḥammad, the details of which are preserved for us by Lewond. It is important for us to quote the letter in order to be able to discuss the terms set forth in it, and to indicate once again that there was

⁴⁹ See Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 142.

⁵⁰ See *supra*, pp. 209 sq.; though Lewond, p. 28 claims that he went to meet Muḥammad from Armenia his account seems to be doubtful.

no change in the religious policy of the Caliphate in Armenia even at this critical juncture:

I, he said, was sent before you by my people to tell you my deliberations which the *naxarars* and *ramiks* [common people] of Armenia united solicit of you. But he who is the Supreme Master of life, carried me away near him, and I was not able to meet you and speak with you. Now, however, I make you swear by the living God and I lay upon you this treaty, the covenant of God which was with Ismayel your father, how He promised to give him the whole world unto bondage and subjugation, in order that you shall make peace with my people, and they shall serve you by paying tribute. Hold your sword back from blood and your hand from pillage, and they will obey you with all their heart. But upon the subject of our faith, I ask that we may be free to keep what we believed and confessed, and let no one of you torture us to force us to change our faith.⁵¹

He then goes on to end his letter by invoking the blessing of God upon him if he should fulfill the desire of the Armenians and the curse of God if he should persist in his evil designs. The Catholicos ordered his attendants to place the letter in his hands after his death so that Muḥammad would have to come personally and take it from him. Reading the letter we are at once struck by its contents and nature. It looks more like a treaty of capitulation than a personal communication of a religious head of a people addressed to a secular authority. This is why we have suggested that the terms which the Armenian historians present in the form of a letter were already negotiated in Damascus. The basic stipulations of the treaty were: first, that there be no retaliatory action against the *naxarars* and the people on account of what had happened, for any retaliation would only force them further into the Byzantine sphere of influence. Second, if no retributive action is taken, the Armenians promise to pay regularly the tribute due upon them – the sign of their total submission to Arab rule. Third, that the Armenians should have freedom of worship and religious practice. It was evident to Muḥammad that the Armenians were willing to submit on terms similar to those of the earlier treaty between Mu^cāwiya and T'ēodoros. Since the Caliphal imperial policies were generally guided by financial and political considerations rather than by religious motives, it was evident to Muḥammad that it was more advantageous for the Arabs to accept the Armenians peacefully rather than to shed unnecessary blood or to deliver the populace into captivity. For by killing the peasants and enslaving the urban people they would only contribute to the depopulation of the land which was contrary to their objectives. Muḥammad, therefore, wisely abided by the terms of the

⁵¹ Lewond, p. 29. Cf. Drasxanakerc'i, p. 96.

treaty and did not embark upon warlike activities against the *naxarars* when he arrived in Dvin.

The signing of the new treaty did not mean that the past was forgotten for, according to Lewond, "He (i.e., Muḥammad) looked upon the *naxarars* of Armenia with an evil eye."⁵² However, it meant that the strained relation between the Armenian Church and the Arab Caliphate greatly improved, and we read,

Having taken the letter from his hands and having read it, he said, "Yes, thy request is fulfilled, thou honourable man of God." And he wrote a letter to the *naxarars* of Armenia and together with the body of the holy patriarch, sent it to Armenia with great honours.⁵³

This improved relation between the Church and the Caliphate was expressed in the freedom of religion granted to the Armenians, in the way in which he treated the body of the dead Catholicos, and finally, in the election of his successor which we shall subsequently discuss. Thus, towards the end of his life, while in exile in Damascus, Catholicos Sahak III in an attempt to avert the impending national calamity, and particularly, the weakening of the Armenian Church, abandoned his earlier Byzantinophile policy and adopted a pro-Arab stand. The adoption of a pro-Arab policy by the Church later became the national policy of Armenia, and in the long run helped to preserve the national institutions of the land until the time when they could reassert their national autonomy and gained their independence a century and a half later.

There are a number of interesting parallels between the life and pontificate of Catholicos Sahak III Jorop'oreci (678-703) and one of his predecessors, Catholicos Nersēs III Dayec'i (641-661/2). Firstly, both of them came from the northern provinces of Armenia, from the Armeno-Iberian border lands – Jorop'or and Tayk' – which were permeated with Byzantine culture and Chalcedonian doctrine. Secondly, both Sahak and Nersēs were champions of the pro-Byzantine political party and for most of their active lives were opposed to the Arab rule. Thirdly, they both made church unions with the Imperial Church, under similar circumstances, and with similar results. And finally, what is most striking, both of the Catholicoi towards the end of their lives abandoned their earlier Byzantinophile policies, renounced the ecclesiastical unions they had formed and pursued a new pro-Arab line.⁵⁴

⁵² Lewond, p. 31.

⁵³ Drasxanakerc'i, p. 97.

⁵⁴ See *supra*, p. 185.

The political change brought about by the *volte-face* of the Catholicos had permanent results; it firmly committed the Armenian Church to a new and totally pro-Arab policy. Translated into doctrinal terminology it meant the rejection of Dyophysitism and the adoption of Monophysitism. This doctrine, on the one hand, made the Armenian Church less suspect to the Arab administration, and hence, less open to attacks and abuse; and on the other hand, it isolated the Armenian Church from the west and brought her closer to the other big neighbouring Monophysite Church, the Syrian Jacobite Church.

E – Conclusion

After his victory over the rival anti-Caliphs and the Byzantine Empire, ^cAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān launched his famous Policy of Arabization. It meant the change into Arabic of the *Dīwāns* (registers), the Arabization of the personnel of the administration, the Arabization of the weights, measures and the coinage, and above all, the segregation of the Arab and the non-Arab people in the Caliphate.

In Armenia the policy of Arabization took two forms; hostility towards the *naxarars* and strained relations with the Church. Arab hostility to the *naxarars* was apparent in their attempt to weaken them politically, economically and militarily, and especially in the appointment of an Arab governor for the first time. This policy produced great resentment among the *naxarars* and led them to rebellion.

The Arabizing policy of the Caliphate in respect to the Church was not different from that in respect to the *naxarars*. They plundered the monasteries and churches of Armenia, killed a number of the clergy, put to death Surhan Dawit', and exiled the Catholicos to Damascus. By forming the church union of A. D. 690 Sahak had become a political suspect who needed to be removed from high office to safeguard the peace and integrity of the Arab Caliphate.

Unlike the case of the *naxarars*, the strained relations with the Church did not signify a change in the basic Caliphal religious policy in Armenia. Their policy had been to isolate the Armenian Church from the Imperial Church, and in this they succeeded.

The Arabizing policy of the Caliphate, however, brought the Church and State within Armenia closer together. The *naxarars* asked the Catholicos to mediate on their behalf with the Arab administration. Sahak was successful in negotiating a new peace treaty in Damascus, thus securing a temporary respite for the *naxarars*.

Finally, with the death of Sahak III Jorop'orec'i in A. D. 703, almost a century of precarious cooperation between the Armenian Church and the Imperial Church, and the spread of Chalcedonianism in Armenia, came to an end; and a new era was ushered in, an era of close cooperation between the Armenian Church and the Arab Caliphate, the consequences of which will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CATHOLICOS EĒIA AND HIS PRO-ARAB POLICY

An important date, not only for the history of Armenia and the study of Church-State relations but also for the study of the political history of the Middle East in general, is the year 86/705. In this year, the Armenian and Albanian Churches reaffirmed their union of faith and condemned the council of Chalcedon. During the same year, Caliph ^cAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān died¹ and was succeeded by his son al-Walīd (86/705-97/715) – better known to the Armenian historians as Vlit'.² Also in the same year the deposed Emperor Justinian II recaptured his throne – a fact not too pleasing to the Arabs. And finally, it was in this year that the Armenian *naxarars* – under the leadership of Smbat Bagratuni, with Byzantine help and encouragement unsuccessfully attempted to free Armenia from Arab yoke and precipitated the catastrophic event of the burning of a large number of their brothers in the churches of Naxčawan and Iram. All of these events had important bearings on Church-State relations in Armenia.

The new Caliph, al-Walīd ibn ^cAbd al-Malik, on the whole followed in the footsteps of his father. The policy of Arabization – in coinage, administration and language was carried on more vigorously. Al-Ḥajjāj, his father's viceroy over ^cIrāq and all the east, was left in his office. If we add to this his imperialistic-expansionistic ambitions and his grandiose building projects,³ we can un-

¹ ^cAbd al-Malik died in Shawwāl 86/October 705.

² Lewond, p. 31; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 98; Asolik, p. 124; Vardan, p. 72.

³ He dreamed of transforming Damascus into an imperial metropolis. He built in it his palace known as al-Khaḍrā and the famous Umayyad mosque (see *infra*, n. 5). He also built Quṣayr ^cAmra in the Jordanian desert, a palace at Minya on the lake Tiberias, a Qaṣr at Jabal Seis and had the mosque of Madīna reconstructed. See K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture: Umayyads* (A. D. 622-750) Oxford, 1969), vol. I, pp. 139-415; Lammens, *Omayyades*, pp. 269-304. On the mosque of Madīna, see Ibn Sa^cd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. I, pt. ii, p. 181, vol. VIII, p. 119; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 6 sq. 47; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 339; Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 1192 sqq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, pp. 421 sq, vol. V, p. 5.

derstand better the attitude he adopted towards the Armenian *naxarars*. What is most striking about al-Walīd is the degree of religious zeal that he exhibited, a thing lacking in most of his predecessors. This religious fervour, however, was expressed more in building mosques, putting an end to the harassment of the pious in Madina, and the encouragement of the study of the Qur'ān,⁴ than in terms of excessive anti-Christian administrative enactments. On the other hand, it is often pointed out that al-Walīd expropriated the church of St. John in Damascus to enlarge the Umayyad mosque;⁵ ordered the transport of the gilded brass cupola of the church of Baalback to be set over the dome of the mosque his father built in Jerusalem;⁶ and the killing of the Taghlibite Chief Sham'alah because he refused to become a Muslim.⁷

To realize his ambitions, the Caliph needed money. The money pouring in from the newly conquered territories a fifth of the war booty - was not enough. He had to get more money from other sources or to increase the amount of tribute gathered from the previously occupied territories. To get more money from Armenia he had to force the *naxarars* to pay more, something which they would not do. Therefore, as we read in the Armenian sources, the Caliph decided to get rid of the *naxarars*:

This one, in the first year of his rule [86/Oct. 705-87/Oct. 706], conceived a plan to extinguish from this our land of Armenia the class of *naxarars* along with their cavalry, on account of the hatred that they had against Smbat Kuropalate. For he said: They will always be an embarrassment and an obstacle to our domination.⁸

⁴ Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 1182 sqq., 1271 sq.; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 224 sqq.

⁵ On the Church of St. John and its conversion into the Umayyad mosque see Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6199 pp. 375 sq.; Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 498; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 481. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi, *al-ʿIqd*, vol. II, p. 202 reports that the Byzantine Emperor wrote an indignant letter to al-Walīd because he had taken over the church of Damascus. On the Mosque itself and its description see Yāqūt, vol. II, pp. 591 sqq.; Muqqadasī, *Taqāsīm*, pp. 158 sq.; Iṣṭakhrī, *Kitāb Masālik al-Mamālik*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, BGA (Leiden, 1870), vol. I, pt. i, p. 60; Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb al-Masālik wa al-Mamālik*, ed. M. G. de Goeje, BGA, vol. II, pt. ii, p. 115; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 125 sq.; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 339; Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, vol. V, pp. 362 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, pp. 5 sq.

⁶ Hitti, *History*, p. 221; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, p. 225.

⁷ Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī* (Cairo, 1357/1938), vol. XI, p. 282; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 481, Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 104; H. Lammens, "Le Chantre des Omiades", JA, 9^{ème} série, vol. IV (1894), pp. 438 sq.

⁸ Lewond, p. 31.

A – The Election of Catholicos Elia

The success of the pro-Arab party in gaining control of Armenia and the new Arabophile policy adopted by the Church and the feudal lords found tangible expression in the election of the new Catholicos, Elia I Arčišec'i (703-717). Before his elevation to the supreme ecclesiastical office he was the bishop of Bznunik', and he had been born in Arčēš.⁹ Both of these geographic locations are found in the southern cantons of Armenia on the northern shores of Lake Van. Traditionally, the Catholicoi coming from these parts of Armenia were known for their anti-Byzantine sentiments, just as the Catholicoi from the northern cantons were pro-Byzantine. This was probably due to two factors: firstly, the Armenians of these regions had accepted the Christian Gospel through the ministry of Syrian missionaries coming from the south;¹⁰ and secondly, these regions were geographically closer to Sassanian Persia and later to the heartland of the Arab Caliphate, and hence were more open to cultural and later ethnic penetration. The election of Elia, therefore, could be taken as a sign of the triumph of the pro-Arab faction, as the election of Nersēs III Dayec'i and Sahak III Jorop'orec'i were signs of the triumph of the Byzantinophile party.

Despite this election, however, there were weighty external factors that disturbed the whole balance and made the Armenian *naxarars* appear suspect in the eyes of the Arab imperial administration. Firstly, a great number of *naxarars* with their cavalry, under the leadership of Smbat Bagratuni, had taken refuge in Tayk'. Secondly, the Arabs were much afraid that Emperor Justinian II, after recapturing the throne, might try to liberate some of the Byzantine territories lost to the Arabs since his overthrow. But above all else, what strengthened their suspicions was the fact that the Armenian *naxarars* joined the Byzantine armies in their fight to free Armenia from Arab domination:

And while they [the Arabs] were pondering on this wickedness [i. e., the destruction of the *naxarars*] in their heart, Smbat, about whom we have narrated, wrote to the King of the Byzantines without delay, and asked [for] an army with the purpose of [making] an alliance. The Emperor consented and fulfilled his request. He gave a great army to a general and sent him to form an alliance. Smbat, being reconciled

⁹ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 97; Asolik, p. 102; Samuēl Anec'i, pp. 275 sq., n. 22. Bznunik', a canton of Turuberan on the north-western shores of Lake Van. See Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 328 sq., 411; Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, pp. 120-124; S.T. Eremyan, *Hayastanə ast Asxarhac'oyc'i* (Erevan, 1963), p. 45.

¹⁰ See *supra*, pp. 6 sq., 29 n. 71.

with the Byzantine general, [joined him] and they [together] arrived at the village called Drašpet, in the canton of Vanand... When Mahmet [Muḥammad ibn Marwān], the commander of the Ismayelite army, heard this, he gathered his forces with great equipage and rose up for battle against them.¹¹

The Byzanto-Armenian army suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of Muḥammad ibn Marwān, and, according to Lewond, more than fifty thousand men were killed. The remnants of the allied army fled back in confusion; Smbat Bagratuni and his companions had to retreat along with the Byzantine army. Emperor Justinian allowed them to settle in the city of P'oyt' – Poti – in the canton of Eger.¹²

We have no information on the attitude of the newly elected Catholicos; he may have been personally opposed to any such adventure, though it seems more likely that the *naxarars* did not even bother to consult him, for they had been under strong imperial pressure.

B – *Catholicos Elia and the Chalcedonian Movement in Albania*

In the eighteenth year of the Sassanian King Kavāt I (A.D.506) an important church council was held in Dvin under the chairmanship of Catholicos Babkēn I Ot'msec'i (490-516).¹³ The council was attended by the ecclesiastical hierarchs of the three Caucasian countries: the Iberian Catholicos Gabriēl with twenty-three of his bishops, the archbishop of Albania and his dignitaries, a delegation from the churches of Persia, and the bishops of Siwnip.¹⁴ All the hierarchs present with one accord condemned the council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo. Despite this unanimity, Chalcedonianism spread slowly in Albania just as it had done in Armenia. The geographic proximity of Albania to

¹¹ Lewond, pp. 31 sq.; Ibn Khayyāf, vol. I, p. 291 reports that in the year 84/703-4, according to Abū Khālid ibn Sa'īd, the Romans marched on Armenia against Muḥammad ibn Marwān and were defeated.

¹² P'oyt' – Poti – was a port on the eastern shores of the Black sea in ancient Cholcis, modern Lazica, see Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, p. 359; Hakobyan, *Ašxarhagrut'yun*, pp. 22 sq.

¹³ On the Council of Dvin in A. D. 505/6 see BL. pp. 41-47; Ter-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 30-39, 152-157; Toumanoff, *Christian Caucasasia*, pp. 139, 141-145.

¹⁴ For the names of the participating bishops and the regions they came from see BL. pp. 41 sqq., 181 sq., 220 sq. The highest ecclesiastical office in Albania up to the second half of the sixth century was that of Bishop or Archbishop of Albania. Tēr Abas (552-594) was the first to hold the title of Catholicos of Albania. See BL. p. 183; Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 70 sqq., n. 3, p. 228; Manandian, *Beiträge*, p. 29; K. Basmadjian, "Chronologie de l'histoire d'Arménie", ROC, 2^{ème} série, tome IX (XIX) (1914), p. 366.

Persia, however, and the fact that Sassanian culture had greater impact on the land than in Armenia, prevented the deeper penetration of Dyophysitism. The real danger threatening Albania was the penetration of Nestorianism from Persia. The spread of Chalcedonianism, however slow and insignificant, prompted a strong reaction from Catholicos Yovhannēs II Gabelean (557-574), who wrote a letter to Catholicos Abas of Albania (552-596).¹⁵ The letter gives the impression that Catholicos Yovhannēs tended to identify the teaching of the council of Chalcedon with that of Nestorius:

We have heard a terrible rumour to the effect that certain ravening wolves in sheep's clothing have entered your country from the monastery of the filthy Peter, called the 'lovers of the poor' but men who are by their deeds haters of Christ and renunciate the Holy Trinity, men who sow the evil tares of the accursed Nestorius and the council of Chalcedon...¹⁶

After the schism of the Georgian and Armenian Churches, the relations between the Armenian and Albanian Churches were strained also. There arose a faction among the Albanians that wanted to break with the Armenian Church following the precedent set by the Iberians. To be able to do that they, like the Georgians, turned to the Dyophysite teaching of Chalcedon. To warn the Albanians against such foolhardiness and to check the spread of Chalcedonianism, Catholicos Abraham I Ałbat'anec'i (607-615) wrote a letter in which two bishops are mentioned by name as the leaders of the movement; the letter is preserved by the Albanian historian and is also found in the Book of Letters.¹⁷ This pro-Chalcedonian movement also had little success and the two Churches continued in one communion.

After the death of Catholicos Ełiazar of Albania in 687/8,¹⁸ Nersēs, the bishop of Gardman, succeeded to the patriarchal office of Albania. Around the same time, while the Arabs were preoccupied with their civil wars, Albania, like Armenia and Iberia, passed under Byzantine suzerainty.¹⁹ To secure his position in Caucasia the Emperor took a number of hostages from the members of the leading dynasties of Iberia and Albania. The Albanian hostages were prince

¹⁵ Kałankatuac'i, p. 91, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 70; C. J. F. Dowsett, "The Albanian Chronicle of Mxit'ar Goš," BSOAS, vol. XXI (1958), p. 477, n. 3. Basmadjian, "Chronologie", p. 366, gives his years as 552-594.

¹⁶ Kałankatuac'i, p. 95, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 72; cf. BL. p. 81.

¹⁷ Kałankatuac'i, p. 219, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 178. Cf. BL. pp. 196 sq.

¹⁸ Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 137 sq. n. 5; p. 189 n. 2; *idem*, "Albanian Chronicle", p. 478 nn. 3-4; Basmadjian, "Chronologie", p. 367.

¹⁹ See *supra*, pp. 175, 183.

Varaz-Trdat of Albania and his three sons.²⁰ Five years later (A. D. 695), as a result of the confusion following the overthrow of Justinian II, Varaz-Trdat was able to gain his freedom and return to Albania, and soon after he submitted to the Arabs.²¹ As a result of this change in policy two of his sons, who were still hostages in Constantinople, were thrown into prison. During these troubled years, when the Arabs were preoccupied with their internecine wars, the Chalcedonian faction gained the upper hand in Albania. The election of Nersēs, bishop of Gardman, was the sign of their triumph:

Upon the death of Eliazars catholicos of Albania, a certain Bakur called Nersēs who belonged to the Duophysite sect of Chalcedon and was formerly bishop of Gardman conspired with Spram, queen of Albania and wife of Varaz-Trdat, who followed the same heresy, and signed an agreement with her to further his ambition.²²

Besides the religious consideration, there were two basic motives behind the triumph of Chalcedonianism: national and political. By the seventh century the Albanians were mostly Armenianized, a phenomenon that is apparent from the fact that Movsēs Kałankatuac'i, the historian of the Caucasian Albanians, wrote his work in Armenian.²³ The Albanian nationalists, aware of this, wanted to sever their connections with the Armenian Church. Also the appearance of Emperor Justinian II, at the head of a large army in Caucasia, tilted the balance in their favour. Moreover, the fact that Varaz-Trdat and his three sons were taken as hostages to Constantinople left no choice for Spram, wife of Varaz-Trdat, but to support a Chalcedonian candidate which probably would have been more pleasing to the Emperor.

The favourable political atmosphere encouraged the two protagonists, Nersēs and Spram, even to resort to the use of force in their attempt to convert the land to Chalcedonianism. Thus we read:

Queen Spram encouraged him, and with her aid and that of other nobles who received his tares, he successfully destroyed and ruined many church altars. He persecuted and banished the orthodox and worthy heirs and children of the Church.²⁴

²⁰ Kałankatuac'i, pp. 250 sq., trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 202 sq.; see supra, pp. 175 sq. n. 86.

²¹ Varaz-Trdat must have submitted around A. D. 698/9, for Kałankatuac'i, *ibid*, reports that his two sons were in jail for twelve years until Philippicus Bardanes freed them after capturing the Byzantine throne in A. D. 711.

²² Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, pp. 189 sq. Cf. Orbelean, p. 204; Drasxanakertc'i, p. 99.

²³ On the discussion of the authorship and date of the History of the Caucasian Albanians see, Dowsett, *ibid*, "Introduction", pp. XV-XX; H. Thorossian, *Histoire de la littérature arménienne* (Paris, 1951), pp. 104 sqq.; M. Abelyan, Erker, vol. III, pp. 505 sqq.

²⁴ Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 190.

The application of force in religious matters is a dangerous exercise, for it produces strong reactions. No sooner had the political tide turned against them than the Byzantinophile party, in all of Caucasia, was swept out of power. Catholicos Nersēs Bakur of Albania and lady Spram had to face the indignation of the pro-Arab current.²⁵ Some of the bishops who had suffered under their rule Yovhannēs of Kapalak, Sahak of Amaras and Simēon of Hoš joined forces with Šeroy, one of the leading feudal lords of Albania and a rival of Varaz-Trdat,²⁶ and together with the main body of the Monophysite clergy, convened a local synod and condemned Nersēs Bakur and his followers. The Synod then wrote a letter to Catholicos Elia of Armenia expressing their homage to him and telling how their fathers shared the same confession of faith with the Armenians, but as a result of the spread of the “world-destroying heresy of Chalcedon” there had arisen a new tendency in Albania to break from the Armenian Church, “tearing asunder the rational flock of Christ”;²⁷ and the dangers of this they

made known to the great patriarch Elia, who strove with all his soul, and addressed them, twice and again, many letters of confession with divine messages, and they still did not repent to turn from their anthropolatrous seduction.²⁸

Why did the Albanian synod write to Catholicos Elia of Armenia about their internal political and religious problems unless the Catholicos had religious as well as political authority over them?

When, however, all of his efforts failed to bring Nersēs and Spram to their senses, Elia had no choice but to resort to the extreme measure of appealing personally to the Caliph.²⁹ The letter written by Catholicos Elia to Oaliph ʿAbd

²⁵ Before the turn of the century Muḥammad ibn Marwān had occupied most of Caucasia, see *supra*, pp. 199, 203 sq., 207. Kaḷankatuac’i, p. 257, trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc’i*, p. 207 n. 7 says in A. E. 146/June 697-June 698 Muḥammad came to Armenia, passed through Albania and reached Č’olay.

²⁶ Varaz-Trdat was of the Mihranid family, of Sassanian origin; see Dowsett, *Dasxuranc’i*, pp. 107 sq. n. 3, 109, n. 6; Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 350; and this family had taken the office of Prince of Albania from the Eranšahik family, the ancient native Armenian dynasty: see Hübschmann, *Grammatik*, p. 39; Justi, *ibid*, p. 20. Probably it was this old rivalry between the native Armenian dynasty and the Sassanian dynasty that erupted again in the rivalry between Varaz-Trdat and Šeroy. Kaḷankatuac’i, p. 238 confirms this by saying that there was a dispute between Šeroy and Spram about authority. In other words, the Monophysite-Dyophysite controversy in Albania went beyond the bounds of religion and involved feudal, dynastic and political issues.

²⁷ Kaḷankatuac’i, pp. 236 sq., trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc’i*, p. 191.

²⁸ Drasxunakerc’i, p. 99.

²⁹ Kaḷankatuac’i, p. 237; Asoḷik, p. 102 and Č’amč’ean, vol. II, p. 783, give the name of the Caliph involved as ʿAbd al-Malik. Vardan, p. 72 and Drasxanakerc’i, p. 99, call him Omar

al-Malik is preserved for posterity by the Albanian historian. Some of the points raised in the letter must be understood in the light of the evidence of Drasxanakerte'i. It is essential for us to give the letter as a whole because in it one can see the authority and position of the Catholicos *vis-à-vis* the Arab administration.

The letter of Elia, catholicos of Armenia, to Abdlmēlik' Amir Mumin to the same effect.

To the conqueror of the universe, Abdlay Amir Mumin, from Elia, patriarch of Armenia. By the power of Almighty God we hold our vassal country subject to your suzerainty. We and the Albanians worship the divinity of Christ. He who is now catholicos of Albania and has his throne in Partaw has come to an agreement with the emperor of Greece, mentions him in his prayers and forces the land to adopt his faith and unite with him. Let this now be known to you, and do not hesitate to act in this matter, for he is in league with a noblewoman. Order those who wished to sin against God to be punished upon your great authority as their deeds deserve.³⁰

It is interesting to note, in the first place, that the Albanian historian ascribes to the Armenian Catholicos an important political-administrative position besides his ecclesiastical office by putting into Elia's mouth these words: "By the power of Almighty God we hold our vassal country subject to your suzerainty." This is further confirmed in the reply of the Caliph:

The reply of Abdlmēlik' Amir Mumin to the letter of Elia, catholicos of Armenia I have read your friendly letter, Elia, man of God, djāthlīq³¹ (catholicos) of the Armenian people, and I have sent my faithful servant with a great army to you. Regarding the rebellion of the Albanians against our authority, we have commanded them to be corrected in accordance with your religion. Our servant shall execute our punishment at Partaw in your presence; he will throw Nersēs and the woman who is his accomplice into irons and will bring them to the royal court in ignominy that I may make them an example for all rebels to see.³²

Moreover, the reference on the part of the Catholicos to "imposts and... profits",³³ may suggest that Elia had some personal responsibility in matters of taxation. It could be that in the absence of the prince of Armenia – Smbat

(ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, 717-720). Orbelean, pp. 204 sq. records the incident without giving the name of the Caliph. A similar incident is recorded at the time of Hārūn al-Rashid (191/806-807), when the Jacobite patriarch was accused of being a spy for Byzantium: see A. S. Tritton, "Islam and the Protected Religions", JRAS (1931), p. 314.

³⁰ Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 191.

³¹ Djāthlīq is a corrupted form of Catholicos, see Lane, *Lexicon*, vol. I, p. 369.

³² Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 192.

³³ See *infra*, p. 248 n. 36. David of Dārā, accused patriarch George to Caliph al-Manṣūr of having taken office without the Caliph's permission and of levying taxes on the Christians: see Tritton, "Islam" (1931), p. 314.

Bagratuni was then living in P'oyt' – the Catholicos unavoidably acquired administrative and political responsibilities besides his spiritual duties.

We see, in the second place, that as a sign of political dependence the Albanians had acquired the custom of mentioning the name of the Byzantine Emperor in their official prayers, implying covertly that the Armenians, on the other hand, remembered the name of the Caliph. Furthermore, this fact is affirmed by what John Catholicos says, in his version of the letter: "Always having remembered we proclaim your name [i.e., that of the Caliph] in our prayers"³⁴ And finally, in the eyes of the Catholicos, just as in the eyes of the Caliphal administration,³⁵ the adoption of the Dyophysite teaching of Chalcedon was tantamount to political submission with all its economic and administrative implications: for Eġia in his letter accuses Nersēs of "... having come to an agreement with the Emperor of Greece, mentions him in his prayers and forces the land to adopt his faith and unite with 'him.'" In other words, for the Armenians the question of Chalcedonianism was a political issue rather than a religious problem. The political interpretation of the controversy is further corroborated by the statement of John Catholicos:

Then Eġia the great, putting into effect his wisdom and magnanimity of heart, wrote a letter to the Ismaelite *amirapet* Omar, warning him, that there is here in our land a bishop and a lady associated with the bishop, who are carried away from the submission of your great dominion and are not in communion with us, since we always commemorate and proclaim your name in our prayers. But they proclaim the King of Romans, they contrive to turn over our country to him. If you should not make haste to extinguish them totally from our midst here, in fact having detached themselves in a short while they [may] surrender to the Romans with respect to imposts and in all shares of profits [lit. works].³⁶

The Arab administration was quick to act; an Arab official arrived at Partaw (Bardha^cah) whither Catholicos Eġia himself had repaired. The Catholicos personally presided over the public trial of Nersēs and Spram. They were both found guilty and Eġia delivered the two offenders to the representative of

³⁴ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 100. The question of remembering the name of the Caliph in prayers was not peculiar to Armenia and Albania. Bar Hebraeus (Ecc.Hist.) reports that when Caliph ^cAbd al-Malik visited Sin'ār(?) the Catholicos probably the Nestorian Catholicos - welcomed him and prayed for the Caliph's welfare: see Tritton, "Islam" (1931), p. 323.

³⁵ The Caliph already saw the action as "The rebellion of the Albanians against our authority." We have seen how the Caliphal administration viewed the ecclesiastical union of Catholicos Sahak III in A. D. 690, see *supra*, pp. 209 sq.

³⁶ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 99 sq., it is not clear what he means by յամենայն մասունս գործոց "in all shares of profits".

the Caliph. A new Catholicos was elected by the synod in place of Nersēs, called Simēon. The latter immediately embarked on the important task of ridding the land from all Chalcedonian traces; even the books of Nersēs were put in boxes and thrown into the river Trtu.³⁷

C – *The Synod of Partaw*

After the election of the new Catholicos the synod formulated a common confession of faith, a kind of an agreed basis on which the two Churches could maintain their communion. The text of the Letter of Confession is given in full by the Albanian historian. But since we are not involved in theological controversies it will suffice to quote only the heading of the Letter:

The signature which Elia, catholicos of Armenia, exacted from the Albanian synod for the sake of unity and a firm alliance between the Armenians and the Albanians.³⁸

It is significant that Elia “exacted” the subscription from the synod; it takes more than an ordinary church hierarch to “exact” a subscription from any synod. It seems that Elia had more authority than that of a Catholicos, and that he had political power at his command with all its trappings. This authority could have come to him only through close contacts with men in the highest circles of the Caliphal administration, for even the representative of the Caliph was to execute punishment at Partaw in the presence of the Catholicos, i.e., by his approval. More important, for our study, than all the above mentioned are the canons that the Synod promulgated. The old tensions between the Church and State, ecclesiastical hierarchy and feudal nobility that Catholicos Nersēs III of Armenia had tried to resolve six decades earlier had erupted anew in Albania. The powerful feudal princes tried to impose their wills on the Church by appointing men of their own liking as abbots and bishops, without consulting the ecclesiastical authorities. Some of them even illegally acquired the ecclesiastical office for themselves. The election of Nersēs Bakur was nothing but the imposition of the will of the powerful Mihranid dynasty. This of course was inevitable, for even Elia had to have a certain amount of backing from some powerful feudators to be elected. However, as an intelligent and far-sighted ecclesiastical statesman, Elia was probably able to see the dangers of such a situation and tried to remedy it.

³⁷ Kałankatuac’i, pp. 238 sq. trans. Dowsett, *Dasxuranc’i*, pp. 192 sq.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 239, trans. *ibid*, p. 193. Orbelean, p. 205, says that Catholicos Elia took from the princes, bishops, chief abbots of monasteries and heads of clans of Albania a written oath that they will no more rebel against the successors of St. Gregory.

The Albanian ecclesiastical situation presented itself as the best opportunity for Elia to exercise his authority; he wanted to stop the *naxarars* of Albania from interfering in the affairs of the Church. Most of the canons are nothing but variations of the same theme:

Let no one have authority to give the Church of God into the hands of unworthy men and soldiers, or to trade it like property, or to give it to princes or their governors as a gift... The churches of God are free and under the authority of no one but the bishops and those to whom they give them, that is, blameless and truly holy priests.³⁹

The document then goes on to give a concrete example of how a cavalryman – most probably a minor noble called P’usan-Veh – made himself prior of the monastery of the Holy Cross and laid his hands on the village that prince Varaz-Trdat had given to the monastery. P’usan-Veh was anathematized and forced to give up his claim, which undoubtedly served as a warning to all the rest of the princes.

Thus Catholicos Elia returned to Armenia after having deposed Nersēs Bakur and exiled him with his accomplice, the lady Spram; he had consecrated a new Catholicos, lord Simēon, for Albania; hammered out a new ecclesiastical union between the Armenian and the Albanian Churches, on the basis of the confession of faith then adopted; put an end to abuses within the Albanian Church; and above all asserted the independence and authority of the Albanian Church *vis-à-vis* the feudal princes, and in an indirect manner, by doing so, he was able to reassert the independence and authority of the Armenian Church *vis-à-vis* the *naxarars*. Elia, therefore, returned with greater authority than any Catholicos hitherto had possessed.

If Elia took such peremptory steps to check the spread of Chalcedonism in Albania, how much more decisive must have been the steps he took in Armenia. We read:

The disciples of Anania (Širakac’i), Hermon, Trdat, Azaria, Ezeqiēl and Kirakos went to Jerusalem and accepted the (doctrine) of Dyophysites, and when they returned, the true Vardapet Anania did not receive them. But wherever they went, they said: he is the cause of blasphemy.⁴⁰

³⁹ *Dasxuranc’i*, trans. Dowsett, pp. 199 sqq. Even though the canons are called “The canons of Lord Simēon, Catholicos of Albania”, they were canons promulgated during the council “Convened on account of the accursed Nersēs”, at which Catholicos Baia of Armenia presided; hence it could be regarded as part of the strategy of Elia to stop princely interference in the affairs of the Church.

⁴⁰ Samuēl Anec’i, p. 85. Anania Širakac’i in his autobiography confirms this, see “Ananias of Shirak”, trans. F. C. Conybeare, BZ, vol. VI (1897), p. 574.

The Catholicos could not tolerate such a dangerous development, so he immediately took the necessary steps to silence them. Eġia warned the public, saying: 'Let no one dare to utter or believe such slander'. Thus Catholicos Eġia effectively checked the spread of Chalcedonianism in Armenia and Albania, and silenced the Byzantinophile party in Caucasia.

D – *The Burning of the Naxarars*

Despite the voluntary submission of Armenia and the new peace treaty between Sahak III and Muḥammad concluded in Ḥarrān, and despite the willingness of the Church and the *naxarars* in Armenia to co-operate with the Arab administration, the Arabs had lost faith in the *naxarar* system. The uprising of 63/682-83 under Grigor Mamikonean, the rebellion of 84/703 with its ensuing battles at Vardanakert, Vanand and Gukank', and above all the disastrous defeat at Drašpet, contributed to the waning credibility of the *naxarars*. The Arabs were convinced that so long as the Armenians kept their feudal institutions with their militia, the Arab hold over the region could never be firm:

When the prince of the Ismayelites saw this thing also, that the Armenian *naxarars* made themselves guides of the Greek army, he again ordered Mahmet to fulfill the same malicious design.

Mahmet having received the perfidious command, ordered a certain Kasm⁴¹ who was his commander in the regions of the city of Maxčawan, to call unto him the Armenian *naxarars* with their mounted contingents on the pretext of registering [them] in the royal *dīwan*, collecting [their] salary [*hrog*]⁴² and returning.⁴³

Though some of the feudal princes were suspicious, many went. After disarming the *naxarars* and their cavalry, Kasm divided them into three groups. He put the first group of eight hundred men in the church of Naxčawan; the second group of around four hundred men, he shut up in the church of Xram; and finally, he put in fetters the heads of the important dynasties and threw them in jail. Kasm then ordered his soldiers to block the doors and windows of the two churches with brickwork and burned them alive.⁴⁴

⁴¹ The name is written in a number of ways, Kasm, Kams, Košm; the Arabs have nothing about any Arab ^c*amīl* in Armenia by that name. Most probably the three forms are corruptions of the Arabic name Qāsim; Asoġik, p. 124, n. 8.

⁴² On *hrog* see *supra*, p. 119 n. 130.

⁴³ Lewond, pp. 32 sq. Cf. Drasxanakerc'i, pp. 97 sq.; Vardan, p. 72; Asoġik, p. 124.

⁴⁴ Drasxanakerc'i, p. 98; Kaġankatuac'i, pp. 257 sq. Kirakos, p. 65; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fol. 383^b; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 474; Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 66; Synaxarion, PO, vol. XXI, p. 214; Martyrology of Vahan Goġt'nac'i, SH, vol. xiii, p. 18; Bar

Patriarch Ormanean sees in the above described incident an expression of religious persecution and for further confirmation quotes the following passage from Lewond: "All of them with one accord, sending up high praises unto the heavens, were transported from this world."⁴⁵ He concludes by saying, "They were martyrs of the true faith."⁴⁶ Obviously the passage quoted is taken out of context and in no way confirms his view. On the contrary, a closer look at the whole passage in Lewond proves that the *naxarars* died not because they were Christians but because of military, political and economic reasons. Undeniably religion had some part to play but it was only a secondary role. Examining the incident in the light of Arab administrative practices in Armenia we see, firstly, that the *naxarars* and their cavalry were brought to one place and disarmed. This implied a certain amount of resistance on the part of the Armenians, for no feudal prince or minor noble would voluntarily lay down his arms. Secondly they were divided into three groups; the heads of the important – i.e., wealthy – dynasties were put in prison while the minor nobility, of whom the feudal cavalry was mainly composed, were locked up in the two churches and burned. Add to these two the fact that the Armenian historians were clergymen without exception, and were apt to see religious motives behind every act, we can understand why all of these events were presented as martyrdoms for the Christian faith. We have already seen that the Umayyad Caliphs were not religious – with the exception of ^cUmar ibn ^cAbd al ^cAziz – and in the days of Caliph ^cAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān the imperial administration was guided by military, political and economic motives. During the reign of al-Walīd the same was true, for the architect of this policy, al-Ḥajjāj, was still in office as the viceroy of all the east. This fact is clearly corroborated by the testimony of Lewond

As for the *naxarars* of the nobles (*azatac'n*), they put them in fetters of imprisonment, tortured them with insupportable torments and exacted from them much gold and an equal weight of silver. They [i.e. the Arabs] promised them that when they

Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 104 put the tragedy during ^cAbd al-Malik's Caliphate. Lewond, pp. 31 sqq.; Asoḥik, pp. 124 sq.; Vardan, p. 72; Arcruni, p. 116; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 85; put it during the Caliphate of al-Walīd. The Arab historians, Balādhurī, p. 205; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 325; Ibn Khayyāt, vol. I, pp. 290 sq., place it during the Caliphate of ^cAbd al-Malik. Balādhurī, says the Arabs did not kill them but wanted to frighten the Armenian princes. Balādhurī and Ya^cqūbī give the location of the incident as the churches in the district of Khilāṭ; while Ibn Khayyāt, says the burning was in al-Nashawā and al-Busfurjān. The Byzantine historian Theophanes, *Chronographia*, vol. I, p. 572, without mentioning the name of the place, gives the year of the incident as A. M. 6195/703 in the fifth year of Emperor Tiberius Apsimar (698-705).

⁴⁵ Lewond, p. 34.

⁴⁶ Ormanean, vol. I, col. 547.

paid unto them the prescribed amount of the money, they would release them alive... And they, because of the peril of the affliction, delivered into the hands of their enemies the great stores of their treasures which they had put in reserve - whether on land or sea on account of their oppressors, in the hope of perhaps thereby saving their own lives.⁴⁷

It is evident from the quotation that the Arabs were more interested in the amount of tribute they could extort from the Armenian *naxarars*, than in converting them to the Muslim religion. After the tortures and extortion, the Arabs killed all the imprisoned princes, and they

took away captive the remaining families of those burned and brought [them] to the city of Dvin, and escorting them thence they transported them to Damascus.⁴⁸

Among those deported to Damascus the sources mention by name a boy of four, Vahan the son of prince Xosrov of Golt'an. The property of the dead *naxarars* and of those who had taken refuge at Poti in Byzantine territory passed into Arab hands.⁴⁹ Consequently, the Arab population of many of the larger Armenian urban centres increased, creating new and more serious problems for the Armenian Church. As a result, the class of *naxarars* within Armenia became very weak: "Foreigners seized upon the splendour of this our land, and the privilege, sovereignty and authority of the *naxarars* was dashed to the ground with humiliation."⁵⁰ Lewond goes even further by saying, "At that time this our land of Armenia was void of the family of *naxarars*."⁵¹ Although there is an element of exaggeration in this assertion, it is true that some of the feudal princes had left Armenia and taken refuge in Eger, others were killed in the fire or in prison, probably some were deported to Damascus, and those who had remained in the land were deprived of their feudal privileges and inheritance. All this, however, was not the death-blow to the ruling noble class, but only contributed to the temporary weakening of the *naxarar* authority within Armenia.

The Church, therefore, found herself facing a new situation; the triangular relationship – Church, *Naxarars*, Caliphal Administration – that characterized

⁴⁷ Lewond, p. 34.

⁴⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 98. Cf. Asolik, p. 125; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fols. 383^b sq.; Synaxarion, PO, vol. XXI, pp. 214 sqq.; Awgerean, vol. I, pp. 188 sqq.

⁴⁹ Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 324 sq., reports that ^cAbd al-Malik appointed his brother Muḥammad ibn Marwān governor over al-Mawṣil, and transferred to him the tribes of Azd and Rabi^cah from Baṣrah; Muḥammad then made an expedition against Armenia, presumably with the help of these tribesmen who subsequently settled in Armenia, especially in the urban centres.

⁵⁰ Martyrology of Vahan Golt'nac'i, p. 11.

⁵¹ Lewond, p. 35. Cf. Samuēl Anec'i, pp. 85 sq.

Church-State relations during the first fifty years of Arab domination of Armenia, was broken, and a new two-centred elliptical relationship evolved, with the Armenian Church occupying one centre and the Caliphal Administration the other. However, it is important to remember that in this relationship the guiding principles remained basically unchanged.

Before closing this section we should try to elucidate two obscure points: what the Catholicos was doing during those troubled years and how the Church emerged from the test of fire. Due to the sparseness of historical information at our disposal it is very difficult to give straight-forward answers to these two questions. The best we can do is to argue from silence or draw certain conclusions from indirect evidence. Though we have no direct assertion about the attitude of Catholicos Eġia, judging from his background, the location of his earlier episcopal see and the manner in which he handled the Nersēs Bakur affair, we may infer that he was an advocate of cooperation with the Arabs. Even after the defeat of Drašpet and the retreat of Smbat and his companions to Poti, he may have tried to work with the Arabs, knowing well that the Caliphal administration was suspicious of the *naxarars*. The silence of the sources could be explained in that the Catholicos, because of his attitude, may have unwittingly become partially responsible for the death of so many princes in Naxčawan and Xram. In the face of such cruelty and deception, Eġia could not have remained indifferent; the Arabs, most probably, abused the confidence and the name of the Catholicos in prevailing upon the *naxarars* to come to Naxčawan, and we read:

Mahmet, moreover, having completed all of these evils, the complaint of this our land ascending reached to the ears of the prince of Ismayel, whose name was Vlit'. And he sent immediately a decree and called him (i.e., Muḥammad ibn Marwān) unto him, and in his place he dispatched Abdl-Aziz (ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Ḥātim al-Bāhilī).⁵²

Keeping in mind the fact that Smbat Bagratuni and a number of other *naxarars* had taken refuge in Cholcis, others were dead or taken captive, while the rest concealed themselves from the authorities, such an effective protest – to the extent that it forced the Caliph to change his governor – could have come only from an authority in Armenia whose word still carried some weight at the court in Damascus. There was no such person at this moment apart from the Catholicos. Most probably the protests of the Catholicos and the people to the Caliph were further confirmed by the reports of his postmaster (*ṣāhib al-barīd*)

⁵² Lewond, *ibid.*

in Armenia. These postmasters acted as chief intelligence officers for the Caliph, hence were called *ṣāhib al-barīd wa'l-akhbār*. Mu^cāwiya is credited for having organized the first postal service in the Caliphate. It was, however, Caliph ^cAbd al-Malik who extended its network and appointed postmasters in each provincial capital.⁵³

Undoubtedly, the possibility of a renewed uprising in Armenia, because the new administrative policy was not pleasing to the masses who felt strongly the loss of their princes, and the desire to win back the dissident princes from Poti, did play an important part in Muḥammad's recall and ushered in the more lenient policy that ^cAbd al^cAziz pursued. As a result of the weakening of the *naxarar* class and the unchanged Arab religious policy in Armenia, the Church emerged from the crisis comparatively more powerful. In the absence of any secular authority, such as the Prince of Armenia or the *Sparapet*, the Catholicos inescapably acquired a greater degree of temporal power; this authority was also seen in the manner in which Catholicos Etia tried to deal with the Chalcedonian controversy in Albania.

E – Captives in Damascus and Exiles in Poti

The intolerable condition of the Armenian captives is described for us in some detail by the Armenian historians: how were they first gathered in Dvin and then dispatched in groups under military escort to Damascus. Many died on the way from exhaustion, sickness or lack of basic necessities.⁵⁴

According to Islamic law, any protected people (*ahl al-dhimma*) that breaks its covenant by rebelling or joining the enemy is to be treated like an enemy, the menfolk are to be massacred, women and children driven into captivity, and all their belongings become war booty to be divided among the Muslims.⁵⁵ This is what the Caliph did. The question that interests us is: How were the Armenian captives treated in Damascus? And to what extent did the treatment reflect any change in Caliphal religious policy towards the Armenian Church? In the description of what happened to the Armenian captives in Damascus, we read:

⁵³ On the postal service see Qudāmah, *Kitāb al Kharāj*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, BGA, vol. VI (Leiden, 1889), pp. 184 sq.; Hitti, *History*, pp. 322 sqq.; D. Sourdel, "Barīd", EI², vol. I, pp. 1045 sq.

⁵⁴ Martyrology of Vahan Goł'tnac'i, p. 19; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fols. 383^b sq.; Synaxarion, PO, vol. XXI, pp. 214 sqq.

⁵⁵ See *supra*, pp. 140, 213 n. 28.

And having arrived in Damascus, they [i.e., the Arabs] took the sons of the nobles to the palace and delivered their children into the instruction [i.e. Muslim religious education], among whom was also the boy Vahan, four years of age, the son of Xosrov the prince of Golt'an. They circumcized and converted him to Islam, and called his name Vahap. He was found excellent among his fellow students in the study of the Qur'ān.⁵⁶

It could well be that the captive children were brought up in the Muslim religion and perhaps Muslim slaves had a better treatment than non-Muslim ones – the Qur'ān and Tradition show a large measure of partiality towards Muslim slaves, even making the freeing of Muslim slaves a meritorious act pleasing to Allah. Probably to ameliorate the miserable condition of bondage, some accepted Islam. But conversion did not automatically make a slave a free man.⁵⁷ There seems to be nothing special about the treatment of the Armenian captives, they were dealt with as any prisoner of war would have been treated. The Islamization of Vahan Golt'nac'i and other youngsters did not imply any change in Caliphal religious policy towards Armenia. Despite the harsh fate of the captives in Damascus, conditions within Armenia improved considerably as a result of the new and lenient policy of ^cAbd al-^cAzīz. This policy took two forms: firstly, the pacification and the reconstruction of the land after the long and destructive uprisings of the Armenians:

Abdl-Aziz, moreover, having become master of this our land of Armenia, pacified all the attacks of iniquity from this our land; and he humiliated the arrogant knavery of the sons of Ismayel with a strong admonition. He built anew the city of Dvin stronger and more spacious in size than before.⁵⁸

And Lewond goes on to describe in detail how he had a ditch dug all around the wall of the city and had it filled with water; he also fortified the city with ramparts and gates capable of being closed by barriers. Secondly, after having established himself firmly in Armenia ^cAbd al-^cAzīz

wrote an edict to the *naxarars* of Armenia [i.e., those in exile], and induced them to return to their own lands. He gave them a writing, confirmed on oath, according to their custom.⁵⁹

The *naxarars* returned after six years of sojourn in Poti, around A. D. 711.

⁵⁶ Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fols. 383^b-384^a.

⁵⁷ For an extensive article on the question of slavery in Islam see R. Brunschvig, "^cAbd", EI², vol. I, pp. 24-40, especially pp. 24-31 and the bibliography at the end.

⁵⁸ Lewond, p. 56.

⁵⁹ Lewond, pp. 35 sq.

The return of the Armenian princes should be seen in the double light of the disintegrating situation within the Byzantine Empire, and the steadily improving conditions in Armenia. Ever since his recapture of the throne in A. D. 705, Emperor Justinian was more interested in chastizing his enemies in Constantinople and avenging himself upon Ravenna and Cherson than fighting the Arabs.⁶⁰ Maslamah ibn ^ʿAbd al-Malīk occupied Tyana in A. D. 709,⁶¹ and soon after in A. D. 711 Justinian II was overthrown by Philippicus Bardanes.⁶² During these troubled years, the Armenian *naxarars* were naturally neglected and their cause temporarily shelved; they felt cheated and deserted in faraway Poti. Thus, when the rescript of ^ʿAbd al-^ʿAzīz arrived and the *naxarars* were reassured of his intentions by what he had done in Armenia, for he had checked the excessive lawlessness of the Arab settlers and had undertaken the reconstruction of the land, there was little else they could do but respond to the peace initiative and return to their paternal allods.

The whole incident could be dismissed as a piece of political jobbery between the Arab governors and the Armenian princes, if there were not a strong religious overtone. We read:

And when they were reassured of his vow, they ravished the city in which they were dwelling, plundered the treasures of the polis and the ornaments of the churches, and returned to Armenia, having separated themselves from the Emperor of the Romans. The Emperor, hearing this, regretted the malice that had happened, called the leaders of churches, the metropolitan and the archbishops, and commanded them to set down in writing anathemas, and during the celebration of the Easter feast he ordered these to be read against those who perpetrated that iniquity...⁶³

It appears as though, prior to their return, there took place intensive secret negotiations between ^ʿAbd al-^ʿAzīz and the Armenian princes in Poti. The governor had given positive evidence of his peaceful intentions – to the extent even of curbing the excessive oppressions of the Azd and Rabi^ʿa tribesmen who felt free, by right, to plunder the land. Now he wanted a tangible sign of their break with the Byzantine Empire. This separation was expressed through the sacking of the city and the plunder of its treasures.

⁶⁰ Ostrogorsky, *History*, pp. 143 sq.

⁶¹ Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 1191, 1197; and Ibn al-Athīr, vol. IV, p. 421 put the occupation in 88/706-707. Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, pp. 498 sq. puts it in the second year of al-Walid (706/707) after a siege of nine months. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6201, pp. 376 sq. in A. D. 709. Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 106, mentions the occupation without giving a specific date. See also Ostrogorsky, *ibid*; Wellhausen, "Kämpfe", pp. 436 sq.

⁶² For the second overthrow of Justinian II see Ostrogorsky, *ibid*, p. 144, n. 2.

⁶³ Lewond, p. 36.

The picture, however, is more intricate than we have hitherto drawn. Why did the Armenian princes plunder the churches of Poti? Was it only a political move or did it have religious overtones? It seems that the Armenians were subjected to a certain degree of religious pressure to accept the Dyophysite doctrine of the council of Chalcedon, a principle often put forth as the precondition for imperial military assistance. It could well be that Smbat Bagratuni – some times referred to as being a Dyophysite⁶⁴ – and some of the other *naxarars* accepted the teachings of the council of Chalcedon while sojourning in Byzantine territory.

Catholicos Elia, however, who was a fervent anti-Chalcedonian, seeing the dangers of such an undertaking, could not have remained indifferent to what was going on in Poti and among the Armenians living in the Byzantine Empire in general. Most probably he warned them against any kind of association with the Byzantine Church and advised them to break with the Empire not only militarily but also spiritually, in conformity with his religious policy. The religio-political nature of the episode is further confirmed by the fact that Emperor Philippicus exiled many Armenians from the Byzantine Empire and these were settled in northern Mesopotamia by the Caliphal administration.⁶⁵ If some of the *naxarars*, out of political considerations and personal gain plundered the churches of Poti, why then did the Emperor exile thousands of Armenians, unless it was because they were unwilling to conform with Imperial religious policy? Emperor Philippicus revived Monotheletism in the hope that he might be able to save Armenia, but the Arabs were too strong and lenient, the Armenians very suspicious and the Emperor opposed to Monophysitism.⁶⁶ The whole thing therefore, backfired and the Emperor had no choice but to exile the Armenians and declare total war on their heresy.

After the incident of the return of Smbat Bagratuni and his colleagues from Poti, there is a lacuna in our sources about the pontificate of Catholicos Elia.

⁶⁴ Orbelean, p. 97; Kałankatuac'i, p. 256.

⁶⁵ Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 482: "A cette époque (1025/713-4) Philippicus, empereur des Romains, chassa les Arméniens de son empire. Ils sortirent et se réfugièrent chez les Ṭaiyayê. Ceux-ci les firent habiter à Mélitène et dans ses environs, et dans l'Arménie IV^e. Les Arméniens se multiplièrent beaucoup et se fortifièrent dans ces contrées, et ils devinrent les auxiliaires du royaume des Ṭaiyayê et les adversaires de l'empire des Romains. Les Romains se montrèrent aussi mauvais gouverneurs parce qu'ils persistaient dans un esprit detestable, remplis de démence, à cause de leur haine pour tous les Orthodoxes." Cf. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6204, p. 582; Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 500; Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 106.

⁶⁶ Ostrogorsky, *History*, pp. 152 sq.; H. Gregoire, "An Armenian Dynasty on the Byzantine Throne", AQ, vol. I (1946), no. 1, p. 19.

The lack of information could be the result of the absence of any new development in church affairs within Armenia. It is, therefore, legitimate to assume that the Catholicos remained faithful to his pro-Arab orientation and that Church-State relations underwent no change until his death in A. D. 717.

F – Conclusion

During the Caliphate of al-Walīd, like that of his father ^cAbd al-Malik, there was no change in the basic Arab religious policy towards the Armenian Church. The Arabs were not interested in the religious doctrines of the Armenians nor did they want to convert them to Islam; what interested them was to collect the tribute from the land and to make sure that Armenia remained under the political suzerainty of the Caliphate.

The election of Elia I Arčīsec'i (703-717) was the sign of the triumph of the pro-Arab party in Armenia. Catholicos Sahak III, towards the end of his life, initiated this pro-Arab policy which found its full expression in the lives of his two successors – Elia I Arčīsec'i and Yovhannēs Ojnec'i. However, during the early years of Elia's pontificate, the pro-Arab policy was negated on account of anti-Arab activity of the *naxarars* in exile, and led the Caliph to declare total war on the *naxarar* system in Armenia.

Catholicos Elia was an ardent anti-Chalcedonian. He did not hesitate to take stringent measures to uproot Dyophysitism in Armenia and Albania. Elia might have had political motives behind his persecution of Chalcedonianism, but that should not be taken as a sign of political opportunism with no religious content. On the contrary, the decisive steps which he undertook suggest that he was also a convinced Monophysite.

The way in which Catholicos Elia handled the Nersēs Bakur affair leads one to presume that the Catholicos had political and administrative authority which went beyond that of an ordinary ecclesiastical hierarch. The Catholicos used the authority invested in him, firstly, to reassert the old spiritual leadership of the Armenian Church over the Albanian Church, secondly, to strengthen the position of the two Churches *vis-à-vis* the feudal princes of both lands.

By uprooting Chalcedonianism from Armenia and Albania the Catholicos widened the chasm between the Armenian and Imperial Churches, which made the situation extremely delicate for the Armenians living in the Byzantine Empire, and finally forced the Emperor to expel many of the Armenians from the Empire.

As a result of the wise use of his authority, Catholicos Elia guaranteed even more political and administrative powers to the catholicosal office and the

Armenian Church. The Caliphal administration looked more favourably on the Church than on the feudal princes, and in particular the Catholicos personally gained greater prestige in the eyes of the Arab government.

The burning of the *naxarars* in the churches of Naxčawan and Xram was not the result of a change in the Caliphal religious policy but merely the implementation of the old administrative principles. The weakening of the *naxarar* class in Armenia *de facto* gave the Church unprecedented temporal powers. The destruction of the *naxarar* class would in time lead to the destruction of the Church and the Armenian nation, but this was not apparent at once. With his newly won prestige the Catholicos was probably in a better position to demand a change in the Arab policy; his protest combined with the political and economic exigencies of the hour and the warnings of the Arab official (*ṣāḥib al-barīd*) in Armenia, might have induced the Caliph to change the governor. The tragedy of Naxčawan and Xram, despite the fact that it weakened the *naxarars*, brought the Church and State closer together for if the nation was to survive they had to work together.

CHAPTER V

CATHOLICOS YOVHANNĒS III OJNEC'I AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

The thesis that the Umayyad Caliphate was an attempt by the Arabs to assert their domination in the world with Islam playing a secondary role, has been treated in an admirable work by J. Wellhausen with the title, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*. It is undoubtedly true that religious fervour was foreign to the first Umayyad Caliphs. As Meccan aristocrats they had tenaciously struggled against Muḥammad, and only joined Islam when they realized they were doomed to fail. It was obvious, however, that the situation under Mu^cāwiya and his immediate successors, could not have continued. The Arab conquests were carried under the banner of religion and despite Umayyad lack of spirituality Islam was bound to triumph over Arabism. It has been already pointed out that Caliph al-Walīd ibn ^cAbd al-Malik showed a degree of hitherto unprecedented religious fervour. His brother and successor, Sulaymān (Jumadā II 96-Šafar 99/February 715-October 717), exhibited even greater piety. He often lent an ear to men of faith, especially the court theologian Rajā.¹ ^cUmar II ibn ^cAbd al-^cAzīz (Šafar 99/Oct.717-RaJab 101/Feb.720) represented the pinnacle of religious piety among the Umayyads. He endeavoured to maintain the unity of the Arab Caliphate by trying, firstly, to reconcile the dynastic claims of the ruling class – i.e., the social, political and economic claims of the Umayyads – with the teachings of Islam; and, secondly, to pacify the grievances of the non-Arab converts (*al-mawālī*).

A – The Policy of ^cUmar II

^cUmar II was brought up among the pious people of Medina who were well-versed in the Qur'ān and traditions (*al-ḥadīth*).² His whole outlook and

¹ Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 1340 sqq.; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 264 sq.; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 91.

² Kutubī, *Fawā'id al-Wafayāt*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-dīn ^cAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, 1953), vol. II, pp. 207 sq.; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Manāqib ^cUmar ibn ^cAbd al-^cAzīz*, ed. C. H. Becker (Leipzig, 1899), p. 10. See also Goldziher, *Studies*, vol. II, p. 43; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 92.

mentality were imbued with religion. When he ascended the Caliphal throne Islam became not only an outer garb but also the pivot of his administration, and religion permeated all aspects of public life. The text of a decree which ʿUmar II dispatched to all his governors has come down to us; in its very first paragraph he makes it abundantly clear that the basis of his government was to be religion.³

This piety took a number of forms: firstly, he put an end to the wars of conquest and called his armies back from the battle fronts. He realized that these battles were fought not to win over to Islam the people in the enemy's territory, but for booty. Hence he wrote:

And whosoever is now engaged in warfare [against the Muslims] let him be summoned to al-Islām before he is engaged in battle; if he accepts al-Islām, he shall enjoy the privileges of the Muslims and be subject to the duties laid upon them, and he shall retain what he had of family and property when he accepted al-Islām. And if he be of the people of the Book and pay the *ḡizya* and withhold his hands [from injury to the Muslims], we accept that from him.⁴

ʿUmar II regarded the first duty of the Islamic State to be the propagation of Islam and not military conquests. Hence, instead of dispatching armies he sent letters to the kings of different lands inviting them to the "religion of truth".⁵

Secondly, he discontinued the offensive practice of taxing the non-Arab Muslims that al-Ḥajjāj had introduced, and put the *mawālī* on an equal footing with the Arabs.⁶ He was aware of the economic pitfalls of such a policy.

Realizing that his action could reduce the State revenue and lead to fiscal chaos, he wisely forbade the partition and sale of *kharāj* lands to Muslims or exempting the lands of the new converts from the land tax they were originally paying.⁷

Thirdly, as a devout Muslim, ʿUmar was careful to safeguard the rights and privileges of the people of the Book – i.e., Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians. They were allowed to keep their places of worship but were subject to

³ Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Sirat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAziz* (Cairo, 1346/1927), pp. 93 sq. trans. H. A. R. Gibb, "The Fiscal Rescript of ʿUmar II", *Ar*, vol. II (1955), p. 2.

⁴ Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *ibid*, p. 95, trans. *ibid*, p. 3.

⁵ Balādhurī, pp. 231, 426, 441; Agapius, *PO*, vol. VIII, p. 505; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6210, p. 399. Lewond, pp. 42-98, has the text of such a letter addressed to Emperor Leo III.

⁶ Abū Yūsuf, p. 75, trans. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation*, vol. III, p. 90, ascribes a tradition to ʿUmar in which he says, "God has sent the Prophet Muḥammad to invite people to Islam and not to collect tribute". Cf. Ibn Saʿd, vol. V, pp. 277, 283.

⁷ Ibn Ādam, p. 44. Cf. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat*, pp. 94 sq.

certain restrictions agreed upon during the treaties or specified in the tradition.⁸ To compensate for the loss of the Church of St. John in Damascus, he gave the Christians of the capital another church in al-Ghūṭa;⁹ reduced the tribute on the Christians of Aela and Cyprus to its original amount;¹⁰ and redressed the injustice against the Najrānī Christians.¹¹

In the light of what we have just said, the statements found in Theophanes and Michael the Syrian that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz forced many Christians to accept Islam and made many martyrs of those who refused, seems intrinsically improbable.¹² Though as a pious Muslim he might have forbidden the sale of wine or rejected the testimony of Christians against Muslims.¹³ The Armenian historians, on the contrary, are full of praises for ʿUmar II:

Umar the son of Abdlaziz, three years. This one was more noble than anyone else. He wrote a letter of confession to Emperor Leo and having received from him his reply, he threw out of their Kuran many of the most legendary things... and as a result of this [correspondence] he showed great indulgence toward the Christians, and everywhere he showed himself worthy. He set free the captives, pardoned the offences of all men and lightened voluntarily the burdens of taxation.¹⁴

Though what ʿUmar had accomplished during his short rule was temporarily undone by his successor, yet the forces he set in motion could not be arrested. Henceforth Islam was to take precedence over Arabism, religion over nationalism. It is in the double light of the growing importance of Islam in shaping the affairs of the Caliphate, and the decreasing authority of the *naxarars* within Armenia, that one should study Church-State relations during the patriarchate of Yovhannēs III Ojnek'i (717-728). The Armenian Church had

⁸ Such as that Christians should wear discriminatory clothes, should not ride horses or build new churches, should hold no religious procession nor ring bells or come out with banners or images; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 488 sq.; Abū Yūsuf, pp. 127, 138 sq. The same author (trans. Shemesh, p. 90) also records a different tradition about ʿUmar II: "ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Thābit ibn Thūbān - His father: I asked ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz why prices are higher than in the time of his predecessors and he replied: My predecessors used to charge the Dhimmīs with more taxes than they could bear, forcing them thereby to sell their crops at low prices to pay the taxes. However, I am not charging anyone with more than he can bear and no one is pressed to sell his crops at cheap prices." Cf. Sewīrus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, PO, vol. V, pp. 71 sq.

⁹ The church of St. Thomas, see Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 125; Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 1275.

¹⁰ Balādhurī, *ibid*, pp. 59, 154 sq.; Brockelmann, *History*, p. 92.

¹¹ Balādhurī, *ibid*, pp. 67 sq.

¹² Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6210, p. 399; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 489. Cf. Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 502; Sewīrus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, PO, vol. V, p. 72.

¹³ Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 489; Armenian version, p. 350.

¹⁴ Arcruni, p. 116. Cf. Lewond, p. 42; Kirakos, p. 68.

irrevocably broken her ties with the Imperial Church and had joined her fortunes to the Caliphate. The question is, how did Catholicos Yovhannēs III try to cope with the rising power of Islam? To be able to understand his response to the challenge of Islam something must first be said about the character and background of the man.

Yovhannēs III, surnamed the Philosopher, was born in Ojun, a village in the canton of Taširk'.¹⁵ According to one source he belonged to the class of minor nobles (*yazat tanē*).¹⁶ He was well versed in grammar, rhetoric, Greek philosophy, and had a working knowledge of Arabic.¹⁷ He wrote a number of theological treatises and introduced reforms in the Church.¹⁸

B – Yovhannēs III and his encounter with ^cUmar II

In the preceding chapter we saw how, during the patriarchate of Elia I Arčišec'i, the highest spiritual office in Armenia acquired substantial temporal powers. The jurisdiction of the Catholicos was greatly enhanced in the eyes of both the Arab government and the feudal lords, to the extent that the Catholicos, with the acquiescence of the central administration, could sit in judgement upon ecclesiastical and temporal dignitaries. The Catholicos had gained the upper hand in his relations with the *naxarars*. The increasing pre-eminence of the patriarch reached its zenith in the life of Catholicos Yovhannēs Ojnec'i.

One of the things most talked about was the manner in which he dressed:

And from underneath he did not wear lamb's fleece but clothed himself with an intolerable shirt of goat's hair; in the outward appearance, however, he dressed with material of excellent quality... He ground gold with a fine file and mixed it with fragrant oil and sprinkled (lit. blew) it on his greying beard which descended to his waist.¹⁹

Leaving aside his personal characteristics we can discern two basic facts: the Catholicos had a profound insight into the manner in which the Arab mind worked; and secondly, the way he dressed reflected the dignity of his office, for he bedecked himself like a king.

¹⁵ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 100; Asołik, p. 102; Vardan, p. 72; Kirakos, p. 67. On Taširk, a canton of Gugark', see Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, pp. 361, 364; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 354 sq.

¹⁶ Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. III, fol. 422^a.

¹⁷ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 100 sq.

¹⁸ Yovhannu Imastasiri Awjnec'woy, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, trans. J.-B. Aucher, *Domini Johannis Philosophi Ozniensis Armeniorum Catholici Opera* (Venice, 1834).

¹⁹ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 101. Cf. Asołik, pp. 103 sq.

Yovhannēs had made such an impression on the Arab governor of Armenia²⁰ that the *amil* recounted to ʿUmar about the phenomenal patriarch. The Caliph wanted to meet the Catholicos, and he ordered that the Catholicos should present himself at the court with all his finery. When ʿUmar saw the Catholicos he “marvelled and was amazed at his elegance, graceful stature and splendidly magnificent appearance”. Then the Caliph asked:

‘Why do you bedeck yourself with such studied neatness, for your Christ honoured the modest and poor dresses, and his disciples did the same?’ He answered and said, ‘Though Christ our God is accepted among us with his body, his divine glory was hidden as though with a curtain; the marvels and miracles of divine power, however, were not hidden but were poured out upon all men. He gave the same gift of signs and miracles into the hands of his disciples, which brought sufficient power to awaken the minds of men to the fear of God and they had no need for imposing dresses. But, because their gift of diverse miracles is barred from us, on account of that we contrive with awe inspiring garments to awaken the foolish ignorance of men unto the fear of God.’²¹

The Catholicos went on to add that the same was true of temporal princes who dress up in such a way as to impress their subjects. But, he continued, if the Caliph was indeed interested in knowing the whole truth and not being carried away by appearances, let him order all those present to leave the audience hall. While the courtiers were departing, Yovhannēs stripped himself of his fine outer garment showing the shirt of goat’s hair he was wearing on his naked body. When the Caliph touched the sackcloth he was so taken aback that he exclaimed in bewilderment, “How is the body of a man able to endure with patience such an intolerable sackcloth, unless patience be given to him by God?”²²

All the Armenian historians are in agreement about the outcome of the encounter: the Caliph honoured him greatly, adorned him resplendently with sevenfold royal garments and gave him treasures of gold and silver. Some later sources, coming from the 13th century – Vardan, Kirakos and the *Menologion* – provide us with information not found in earlier works. It seems to me that these three works are all based on a single source. We saw earlier that the *Menologion* is the work of Kirakos Ganjakec’i who also wrote a history of

²⁰ Drasxanakertc’i, p. 102; Asolik, *ibid*; and Synaxaire, PO, vol. XXI, p. 312 call the governor Vlit’ (al-Walid); but we find no reference to such an Arab governor in the Arab sources. Probably he was a lieutenant-governor.

²¹ Drasxanakertc’i, p. 103. The fact that Ojnec’i had an audience with the Caliph is not extraordinary; patriarch Elias of the Jacobite Church had an interview with al-Walid, see Tritton, “Islam” (1931), p. 314.

²² Drasxanakertc’i, p. 104.

Armenia.²³ On the other hand, Kirakos (1200-1272) and Vardan (1200/1210-1270) were contemporaries and were both disciples of Vanakan Vardapet (d. A. D. 1251). They also come from the same region of Armenia – eastern Armenia, hence, both are called Arewelc'i or Ganjakec'i –, they had been to the same places (both had been in Cilicia in the west), and they had both gone through the bitter experience of the great Mongol invasions.²⁴ Thus, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that they also had the same oral and written sources upon which they drew to write their histories.

Of the two, Kirakos gives a more detailed account of the encounter between ʿUmar and Yovhannēs. By giving these details, he raises the whole incident from the factual, historical level to that of folklore, turning history into a novel with the Catholicos and the Caliph playing the roles of the hero and the villain respectively.²⁵ We must, therefore, try to distinguish between historical fact and common folklore in Kirakos's account. Thus according to Kirakos the Caliph was so impressed by what he saw that he "praised the religion of the Christians", a statement which is very unlikely and at best an extreme distortion of the Caliph's religious attitude. Then, like all oriental despots of common folklore, the Caliph added. "Ask what you desire and I shall do it for you". The Catholicos magnanimously declined to take any advantage for himself and in turn asked for three things: firstly, that no Christian should be forced to abjure his religion under any circumstance; secondly, that members of the clergy and church property be free of tribute; finally, that wherever Christians be, they should have the right to exercise their religion without intimidation. He concludes by saying,

Grant us these requests in writing and all my people will serve you. And he immediately commanded a letter to be written according to his [i.e. the Catholicos'] demand. He sealed it with his ring, lavished upon him favours, convoked numerous troops under him and sent him with great honours to the land of Armenia.²⁶

Most probably the Catholicos also interceded on behalf of the Armenian captives who were kept in Damascus since A. D. 705.

²³ See *supra*, pp. 43-45.

²⁴ Zarphanalean, *Dprut'iwn*, pp. 730-754; Abelyan, *Erker*, vol. IV, pp. 229-246; Thorossian, *Litterature*, pp. 150 sqq., 167-170, 171.

²⁵ Beside the written sources that the historian enumerates in his introduction, it seems that Kirakos utilized a certain amount of oral tradition some of which was of pious origin, circulating in monasteries or among the common people. Through five centuries of oral transmission historical events were distorted and many new elements introduced.

²⁶ Kirakos, p. 68. According to the 15th c. Menologion Ms. Marsh 438, vol. III, fol. 423, "The holy patriarch asked the Sultan to expel from the upper provinces of our land the nation of the Romans, who deprive us of the teachings of our fathers according to the spirit, and of our earthly inheritance according to the body."

We have seen earlier that the nobles and the clergy were free of paying any tribute.²⁷ It could well be that as a result of the rebellion of Armenia during the last years of Grigor Mamikonean's rule, the ecclesiastical union at the time of Catholicos Sahak III and Emperor Justinian II, the uprisings of A. D. 703 and the economic exigencies of the Caliphate, the fiscal policy of the central government underwent a drastic change. Consequently the clergy and church property were most probably subjected to taxation before the Caliphate of ʿUmar II. The fiscal policy in Armenia could have been complementary to that of al-H.ajjāj in Iraq and of Usamah in Egypt, which we shall see in the next paragraph.

The fact that members of the clergy and church property were taxed at this time was not peculiar to Armenia.

We find ample evidence that during 80/699-100/718, many monasteries and members of the clergy were also subject to taxation in Egypt.²⁸ According to the History of Sewirus ibn al-Muqaffa^c, Caliph al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik sent Usamah as governor over Egypt. The latter ill-treated the monks, mutilated them, and branded their left hand with a hot iron ring and the name of their monastery:

And out of love for money he commanded the governors to put the people to death, and bring him their money; and he wrote to them, saying: 'I have delivered up to you the lives of the people, therefore collect all the wealth that you can, from bishops or monks or churches or any of the people, and bring stuffs and money and cattle and all that you find belonging to them, and respect no one. And whatever place you visit, pillage it.'²⁹

We find that Usamah even threatened to destroy all the churches and make the monks serve on board the ships of the fleet, if they did not pay him a thousand *dinars*. He assembled the abbots of monasteries and tortured them to extort large sums of money. Usamah remained governor of Egypt until the Caliphate of ʿUmar II. The new Caliph

commanded that there should be no taxes upon the property of the church and the bishops, and began to set the churches and bishops free from the impost on land; and he abolished the new taxes, and rebuilt the ruined cities.³⁰

²⁷ Samuēl Anec'i, p. 82; see *supra*, p. 141.

²⁸ According to information coming from the Papyri, during the same period some priests paid poll tax while others did not in Egypt, but nowhere do we find that monks paid any poll tax. Tritton, "Islam" (1928), p. 486. Similarly, wealthy monasteries such as that of Saint Mary, Saint Pharos and Saint Barbaros, paid tax circa 98/716-7; *ibid*, p. 488.

Cf. Abū Yūsuf, pp. 69 sq., trans. Ben Shemesh, p. 84.

²⁹ Trans. B. Evetts, PO, vol. V, pp. 68 sq.

³⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 71 sq. Cf. Michael the Syrian, Armenian version, p. 350; Tritton, "Islam" (1928), p. 495.

Hence, it could well be that ʿUmar II discontinued the practice of taxing the clergy and church property in Armenia as the later sources claim. However, the request that all forced Islamization be forthwith discontinued and all Christians everywhere be given freedom of worship seems to be an echo of events that took place during the second and third centuries of Hijra. Despite the fact that both Theophanes and Michael the Syrian refer to forced conversions,³¹ it has been pointed out that during the first seven decades of Arab domination one does not come across any single case of forced Islamization.³² On the contrary, the early Umayyad Caliphs were more than happy to allow the Armenians to continue in their Christian religion so that they could charge them the tribute prescribed on the “protected people” for retaining their existing faith.

C – Yovhannēs III’s Activities after his Return

Upon his return to Armenia the Catholicos took upon himself the task of finalizing the break with the Byzantine Church, in the hope of making Armenia less open to suspicion and thus forestall any danger of direct Arab intervention in the internal affairs of Armenia and its Church.

According to Kirakos (and his assertions are confirmed by Vardan and the Menologion), after his return from Damascus the Catholicos

... drove out all the Greeks who were in this our land of Armenia, whether prefects or officers. They were put to flight in such haste that they were unable to carry with them their treasures but buried [them] here in this our land, and took with them the particulars of the place [where they had buried them] in writing.³³

This tradition seems somewhat exaggerated. It is very doubtful if there were any Greeks – let alone prefects and officers – left in Armenia by this time. Probably the idea that the Caliph convoked a large number of troops under the Catholicos who came and drove the Greeks out of Armenia should not be taken literally; it looks more like a piece of pious folklore. Judging from his subsequent activity, most probably what the Catholicos did was to rid Armenia of all

³¹ *Supra*, p. 274 n.12.

³² The two cases on which we have dwelt at some length-Surhan Dawit’, surnamed Dynec’i (*supra*, pp. 153 sq., 211-215) and Vahan Goł’tnac’i (*supra*, pp. 256, 261 sq.; *infra*, pp. 325-332) are the best confirmation of our assertion.

³³ Kirakos, p.68. Cf. Vardan, p. 73, who records that the Catholicos expelled the Greeks at the command of the Caliph; and Ms. Marsh 438, vol. III, fol. 423, which says that he drove the Greeks out of Upper Armenia. A variation of the same theme is found in a later minor chronicler of the 17th century, Hakob Karneç’i, “Tełagir Verin Hayoc’”, MŽ, vol. II, p. 558.

Chalcedonian practices, especially in the cantons bordering the Byzantine Empire and Iberia.³⁴ Though at an earlier date Catholicos Elia had tried to uproot Chalcedonianism from Armenia and Albania, it seems as though there may still have remained pockets of strong Chalcedonian resistance to the Armenian National Church in different parts of the land which could have been misinterpreted by the Arab government as a sign of disloyalty.

Thus after his return Yovhannēs III tried to reform the worship and liturgy of the Church:

He, in effect, wrote down in a much more learned manner, than hitherto, and gave to the Church of Christ the complete arrangements of the hours of worship... and he also explained the meaning of each single office for the consolation of the clergy of the Church.³⁵

To this end the Catholicos convoked an ecclesiastical council. The text of the opening oration and the thirty-two canons promulgated at the council are preserved for us in his collected works and the Canons of the Armenian Church.³⁶ The oration explicitly summarizes all the important problems, practical, disciplinary and dogmatic, that the Church faced.³⁷ Judging from the way in which he presented the issues, both in the oration and the canons, one is impressed at the insight the Catholicos had of liturgical, theological and philosophical problems. In particular his understanding of the meaning and symbolism of the Armenian form of worship, indicates his versatility in practical as well as dogmatic questions.

The thirty-two canons that the council promulgated were disciplinary and practical in nature, and deal with a number of problems. The most pressing

³⁴ Muyldermans, *Domination*, p. 103, n. 1: J.-B. Emin understands the passage as though the Catholicos forbade the use of the Greek language in all of Armenia, while Muyldermans suggests that the Catholicos chased all the Chalcedonians. It is more likely that he tried to stop Chalcedonian practices in Armenia such as the use of leavened bread, mixing water with the wine in the holy Eucharist and the deletion of the "Who wast crucified" in the Trisagion.

³⁵ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 101.

³⁶ Aucher, *Domini Johannis*, pp. 1-77; Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, pp. 514-537.

³⁷ The oration starts with a short biographical note and then goes on to summarize the outstanding issues such as the question of Chalcedonian practices, heretics, anointing crosses, feasts and fasts, and the order of worship. Unfortunately some of the headings enumerated at the beginning of the speech are not raised in the main body (no.11-14); one wonders why are they missing. It is interesting here to note that the only reference to iconoclasm is the question of anointing crosses, discussed in the canons 27-28. On Iconoclasm in Armenia see S. Der Nercessian, "Une apologie des images du septième siècle", B (1944-45), vol. XVII, pp. 58-87; *idem*, "Image Worship in Armenia and its Opponents", *Armenian Quarterly* (1946), vol. I, no. 1, pp. 67-81.

issue that the Catholicos faced at the time seems to have been that of drinking. We saw earlier the attitude of Caliph ʿUmar to drinking;³⁸ probably this is the reason why the first, second and fourth canons deal with the problem of drinking.

Canon 1 A bishop or priest or deacon or whosoever it might be of the clergy of the Church, found in the state of intoxication, let him not dare to administer the sacrament, untill having passed a number of days, he should purify himself by penance with fasts and prayer, and then only shall he dare to approach unto his office and to communion. But if he should stubbornly remain in the same gluttony, let him be dismissed.

Canon 2 A layman committing the same offence let him not dare to commune without repentance and penance; then if anyone should continue in the same intemperance, let him be excommunicated.

Canon 4 It is not befitting, when on the morrow one is to receive nuptial blessing, to gather together from the evening, get drunk and debauch, but with temperance and prayers to render themselves worthy to the blessing of the crown and the divine communion. Then if anyone should be found having done this, let the priest change the day and as we have pronounced, let him command [them] to be married and to receive the Sacraments with sobriety and worthy disposition.³⁹

Secondly, the Catholicos tried to introduce a degree of uniformity in the liturgical services of the Armenian Church. In the second section of the opening oration under the heading, "Accusation about those who in diverse forms and not with one arrangement of parts carry out the order, the rites and the established ceremonies,"⁴⁰ the Catholicos spells out in no uncertain terms the reason why he had convoked the council:

For I perceive increasing irregularities in greater number and in grave matters, not only among the laity but even more among members of orders and prelates of churches. We arrived at the one way of truth, with one tongue, by the preaching of one man;⁴¹ and now we follow many tracks and many turns, and we perform in immeasurably diverse ways and in forms different to each other, both in our conduct and our praises directed unto God: whilst we suffer the same injuries which were

³⁸ See supra, pp. 273 sq. The attitude of Islam to drinking is well known. In the Qur'ān the attitude of Muḥammad underwent a certain evolution from acceptance in Sūra xvi, 67, to disfavour in ii, 219, and finally to total hostility and prohibition in v, 90. In the tradition wine is regarded as the root of all evil and he who buys, sells or drinks wine is cursed. See A. J. Wensinck, "Khamr", EI¹, vol. II, pp. 894-897; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. I, p.27-38.

³⁹ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I, pp. 516 sqq.

⁴⁰ Aucher, *Domini Johannis*, p. 2.

⁴¹ Probably refering to St. Gregory the Illuminator, see Aucher, *ibid*, p. 15, n. 3.

spoken of in ancient history, namely, we fight among ourselves, man with his brother, man with his neighbour, city against city and canton against canton. In regard to the earthly occupations and the exchange of commodities we are on speaking terms and treat with one another, and when we are gathered before the God of peace to implore His peace, we are alarmed and disquieted, and like strangers and men of alien speech we suffer and put up with one another, as though one were a barbarian before him and others were barbarian to the rest.⁴²

This confused state of affairs in the liturgy and form of the worship service of the Church was not only intolerable but also extremely dangerous, both internally for the position and unity of the Church, and externally in the eyes of the Muslim rulers. The diversity in the liturgical practices and irregularities in the worship, and the resulting factionalism, could only serve to provide a loophole for the Arab administration to interfere in the affairs of the Church. Thus to regularize and unify the liturgy the council promulgated a number of canons. Canons seventeen and eighteen speak about the Sabbath vespers and nocturns; twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-five about 'the morning office', vespers and nocturns; twenty-four about Sunday morning liturgy; and canons twenty-six and thirty speak about the celebration of the Epiphany.⁴³

Thirdly, Yovhannēs Ojnec'i tried to rid Armenia of all Chalcedonian practices that had crept into the Armenian Church. Canons eight and twenty deal with such practices:

It is befitting to present the bread unleavened and the wine unmixed on the sacred altar according to the tradition entrusted by Saint Gregory unto us and not to bow down to the traditions of other Christian people; for the holy Illuminator brought this tradition from him who fulfilled the Laws [i.e., Jesus Christ].⁴⁴

⁴² Aucher, *ibid*, pp.15 sq. For the liturgical canons of Yovhannēs III see N. Ter-Mikaēlian, *Das armenische Hymnarium* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 61.

⁴³ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I, pp. 523, 525 sqq., 530 sq. 532, 534.

⁴⁴ *Awrinakan*, could also mean a 'lawyer', see Aucher, *Domini Johannis*, p. 60, n. 1. See also Hakobyan, *ibid*, p. 519. Cf. Yovhannēs' treatise in BL, pp. 234-238 with the heading, "Against those who corrupt the holy mysteries with leaven and water". In this treatise Catholicos Ojnec'i compares the unleavened bread and unmixed wine with the virginity of the Theotokos and equates those who use leavened bread and mix water with the wine with those that say the body of Christ is corruptible. Thus by mixing water and using leaven they corrupt the most pure and incorruptible mysteries. The Israelites were ordered by Moses to eat unleavened bread for the Passover and the manna on which they fed in the wilderness was unleavened; both were symbols of the body of Christ. Similarly the bread of the communion should be unleavened and the wine unmixed.

It is necessary and befitting to subjoin the 'who wast crucified' three times according to the trifold repetition of the trisagion, and not to abbreviate it nor be found lacking in the grace of the cross of Christ.⁴⁵

Finally, the council dealt with the problem of heretics and those who associate themselves with heretics.

Canon twenty-nine states:

It is not befitting at all to be indifferent and to commune with heretics but to turn away from them with disgust and not share with them in spiritual altars and material [lit. physical] tables, so that they should be shamed and should desire to join with those who teach orthodoxy.⁴⁶

But realizing that ostracizing the heretics socially would not have deterred them or those who associate with them from their heresy, the council went on to promulgate a much more comprehensive canon. This canon is of particular interest for us because it shows the extent of the power that the Church had acquired in Armenian society:

It is not befitting for anyone to sojourn in the dwellings of impious Messalians who are called Paulicians or to keep company with, talk and have dealings with them, but to depart entirely from them, to abhor and hate them, for they are the sons of Satan and tinders for the eternal fire, and they are estranged from the love of the will of the Creator. If there be anyone who should consort with them and should show sympathy and friendship, it is necessary to thrash such people and inflict upon them severe punishment, until they should come to their senses and be made whole in faith. Then if they should be found again in the same heresy, we command that such should be completely cut off and cast out as pestilential diseases from among the members of the Church of Christ. 'Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby may be defiled.'⁴⁷

We have seen earlier how the Armenian Church dealt with the heretics,⁴⁸ but it is interesting to note that the practice of branding the forehead and exile was either discontinued or else regarded as insufficient. Instead, the council recommended inflicting heavy physical punishment upon those who associate themselves with heretics or are found in heresy, as a better deterrent against all

⁴⁵ Hakobyan, *ibid*, p. 525.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 533. He has an extensive treatise against the Paulicians, Aucher, *op. cit.* pp. 78-107; and against the Phantasiasts (i.e., the extreme Julianists), *ibid*, pp. 108-179.

⁴⁷ Hebrews 12:15b. Hakobyan, *op. cit.* pp. 534 sq. For a discussion of the Messalians and Paulicians at the time of Catholicos Yovhannēs III see Ter-Mkrtschian, *Die Paulikianer* (Leipzig, 1893), pp. 49-66.

⁴⁸ See *supra*, pp. 90 sqq. n. 76.

deviation. Ormanean thinks this should be taken in a spiritual sense and not as physical chastisement, because, he says, it is linked with being cast out of the Church – i.e., excommunicated. But the word *xoštangel* has only physical meaning in Armenian and can not be taken in any spiritual sense.⁴⁹ In view of the fact that in the Islamic Caliphate a person had no status except as a member of a religious community – Muslim, Christian, Jewish or Zoroastrian – being excommunicated meant not only the loss of spiritual benefits – such as communion, baptism etc. – but also the deprivation of social, legal and above all political rights. This total loss was tantamount to being regarded a polytheist and thus being liable to death.

On the internal level the relations between the Church and State were most probably governed by mutual accommodation in face of external danger. It could well be that Catholicos Yovhannēs III, like two of his predecessors Elia I and Nersēs III – tried to assert the authority of the Church *vis-à-vis* the feudal lords, and was perhaps more successful because of the mistrust of the Arab administration toward the *naxarars*. However, nothing is found in the canons that indicate any attempt on the part of the Church to appropriate to herself the authority of the princes in the administrative machine of the land. The Catholicos seems to have realized that the Church had a better chance of survival under Islam in cooperation with the *naxarars* than by trying to usurp their authority and alienating them.

D – Yovhannēs III: the Statesman

Caliph ʿUmar II died in Rajab 101/February 720 and was succeeded by his cousin Yazīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik who ruled for four years, till Shaʿban 105/January 724. He was a weak and indifferent ruler. He reversed practically everything his predecessor had done, “it was not from policy or intention that he opposed ʿUmar II,”⁵⁰ but mainly because of his ineptitude. He let things take their own course instead of directing them; he passed most of his time in hunting and drinking, especially in the company of two of his women singers,

⁴⁹ Ormanean, vol. I, col. 566. In the canons of the council of Šahapivan of A.D. 444/5 there are two kinds of punishments: financial and physical. If the offender was a noble he was not to be subjected to physical ill-treatment but had to pay fines; Hakobyan, *Kanonagirkʿ*, vol. I, pp. 422-466. Canon 19 of the same council even orders that the sinew-nerve of Messalians should be cut and they should be cast in a leper-house, *ibid*, p. 461. See NBHL. vol. I, pp. 965 sq.; Ačaṙean, *Armatakan*, vol. III, p. 583.

⁵⁰ Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, p. 323.

Sallāmah and Ḥabābah, who played an important role in his court.⁵¹ The Arab historians, in general, have nothing positive to say about him and neither do the Armenian, Byzantine or Syrian historians. Lewond records:

But then after his [i.e. ^cUmar II's] death a certain Yazkert [Yazīd II] ruled six years, who was a wicked man; moved by fanaticism he waged war upon the Christian people with much malice; since he was led by the fury of the spirit of abomination, he gave orders to dash to pieces and destroy the painted icon of the true incarnation of our Lord and Saviour, and of his disciples. He also dashed to pieces the sign of the cross of the Lord Christ... and reaching the peak of his fanaticism he ordered the massacre of all swine.⁵²

It is interesting to point out that it was Yazīd II who first ordered the destruction of all icons and images, and ask if it had any influence on Byzantine Iconoclast Controversy that started some four years later.⁵³ Though he was not pious, nor was he a man of strong character; it could be that he was unable to disregard the rising tide of Islam and perhaps gave in to the popular clamour for anti-Christian activity.

According to Balādhurī, Yazīd II appointed Mi^claq ibn Ṣaffār al-Bahrānī as governor of Armenia, then dismissed him and set in his place Ḥārith ibn ^cAmr al-Tā'ī.⁵⁴ The Armenian historians, however, record that Ḥārith came to Armenia in the first year of the Caliphate of Hishām ibn ^cAbd al-Malik (105/724-126/743).⁵⁵ Beginning with the Caliphate of Yazīd II, and through part of

⁵¹ On Sallāmah see ^cUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālāh, *A^clām al-Nisā'* (Damascus, 1377/1958), vol. II, pp. 229-234; Iṣfahānī *Aghānū*, vol. VIII, pp. 334-351. On Ḥabābah see ^cUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥālāh, *ibid*, vol. I, pp. 232-235; Iṣfahānī, *ibid*, vol. V, pp. 122-146.

⁵² Lewond, pp. 99 sq. Cf. Asolik, pp. 127 sq; Vardan, p. 73; Arcruni, p. 116; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 87. According to Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6215, pp. 401 sq., a Jew from Laodicea in Phoenicia prophesied that Yazīd would rule for forty years if he should destroy all the icons in Christian churches in his dominion; thus Yazīd promulgated a decree to that effect, but it was not carried out because he died soon. Dionysius of Tell-Mahré, pp.17 sq., says that in 1035/723-4, Yazīd ordered the destruction of all the images in temples, churches and houses. The following year he also ordered the killing of white dogs, white doves and white roosters; and ordered the killing of all fair haired and blue eyed people, but fortunately the last command was not executed. Cf. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 489; Armenian version, p. 351.

⁵³ See Ostrogorsky, *History*, pp. 161 sq.

⁵⁴ *Futūḥ*, p.206. Ibn Khayyāt, vol. I, p. 342, says he then appointed al-Jarrāḥ ibn ^cAbdallah al-Ḥakamī.

⁵⁵ Lewond, p.100, says he came in the first year of Hishām (Sha^cban 105-Sha^cban 106/January 724-January 725); Kaṭankatuac'i, p.258, puts it in AE 174/May 725-May 726; while Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 66, in AE 170/721-2. Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 102 says, "In this year (i.e.,107/725-6) Hishām dismissed al-Jarrāḥ ibn ^cAbdallah al-Ḥakamī from Armenia and Ādhārbayjān and appointed governor over them his brother Maslamah ibn ^cAbd al-Malik, then

that of Hishām, the lenient policy inaugurated by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Ḥatīm al-Bāhilī came to an end. The coffers of the central government were empty because of the fiscal policies of ʿUmar II and the debauchery of Yazīd II. Caliph Hishām had to find a means to remedy the situation, he therefore ordered Ḥārith to make a census in Armenia for the purpose of increasing the tribute:

And this one [i.e., Hishām], in the first year of his reign, conceived an evil design; he sent a certain general whose name was Hert' (al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAmr al-Ṭāʾī), to make a census in this our land of Armenia for the sake of aggravating the iron collar of the yoke of servitude and thralldom with manifold afflictions, as though being angry at the indulgence of Omar; as if he, with injustice, reduced to nothing the stores of the treasures that were amassed by the sovereigns who were before him. And he brought upon this our land great misfortune, so that everybody sighed on account of their incessant tribulations, since there was no escape for anyone from the intolerable misfortunes.⁵⁶

Movsēs Kałankatuac'i, on the other hand, gives important details missing in Lewond:

In the summer of the year 174 [725-6] there was a plague among the cattle, and in the winter a cadastre was made by Hert' which subjected man and beast and all regions of the country to servitude by the imposition of heavy tribute... In the same year Smbat, prince of Armenia, died.⁵⁷

Thus, according to the Albanian historian, Ḥārith introduced important administrative and fiscal changes; the tribute that was originally gathered from each household was changed into poll tax, land tax and animal tax.

Between the death of Smbat Bagratuni in AE 174/725-6, and the appointment of Ašot Bagratuni as prince of Armenia by Marwān ibn Muḥammad, in A. D. 732, there is a span of six years when we find no indigenous prince of Armenia, and Armenia was governed directly by Arab officials. Under such circumstances the only institution that could defend the rights of the Armenians was the Church. The Catholicos had to deal directly with Arab governors

Maslamah appointed governor over them al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAmr al-Ṭāʾī" Cf. Ibn al-Khayyāṭ, vol. II, p. 350. Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 395, says that Ḥārith defeated the Turks in 112/730-1. From all the evidence at our disposal we could conclude that Ḥārith came to Armenia during the first year of Hishām, most probably in the beginning of A. D. 725.

⁵⁶ Lewond, pp. 100 sq.

⁵⁷ Dowsett, *Dasxuranc'i*, p. 209. The date of the death of prince Smbat Bagratuni is only recorded here. Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 449 puts his death in AE 175/726-7. See also Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 341.

who were interested in one thing only, the increase of the State revenue from Armenia.

Faced with the hostile attitude of the Arab government towards the *naxarars*, the rising importance of Islam in the administration – with its resulting fanaticism – and the new fiscal policy introduced by Hishām on the one hand; the resurgence of heretical movements, such as the Paulicians and the Phantasiasts, and the influx of Chalcedonian elements from the recently occupied Byzantine territories, on the other, Yovhannēs III found himself in a hitherto unprecedented situation. It was a historic challenge which threatened to destroy the national existence of Armenia and the Armenian Church. The Catholicos had to respond in such a way as to safeguard the nation and the Church against both external and internal perils. This response took two forms: first, Yovhannēs III collected and edited the canonical decisions of the Armenian Church in a *corpus juris canonici*; second, he convoked the important council of Manazkert which brought about the union of the Armenian and Syrian Churches.

1– *The Book of Armenian Canon-law*

Catholicos Yovhannēs III was not satisfied in dealing only with the immediate pressing issues of the hour by convoking the council of Dvin in A. D. 719. He wanted to establish a permanent source of legal precepts which could be used to defend the rights of the Armenians. The absence of a national legal system was extremely dangerous under the given circumstances. Benefitting from the non-existence of such a code and hoping to secure a more favourable settlement some would be tempted to resort to Arab courts. There was no legal means to stop them from doing so. Most probably the Catholicos realized that to be able to prevent effectively such dangerous acts and to restrain the Arab administration from meddling in the internal disputes of the Church and the *naxarars*, he needed to have a legal weapon. Thus, to prevent any threat of Arab intervention and to safeguard the interests of the Armenians, the Catholicos created a new national legal system – basically religious in nature, and therefore, unobjectionable to the Caliphate – by collecting and organizing the canonical decisions of the Armenian Church, along with those of the first three Ecumenical councils and a number of other canons.

In the colophon of the corpus, Yovhannēs III states the reasons for his undertaking:

The luminous path to God is the total obedience of the believers in Christ. The holy fathers formulated the observance of canonical ordinances in order that whosoever

are called by extraordinary wisdom to the celestial habitation for mankind, walking along the same path, should attain the goal of good works; in order, also, that those who are desirous of entering the celestial habitation, should reprimanding chastise them that walk self indulgently. And since these canons which have been sowed by the holy fathers were some with certain people and others with other people, and not all were available to all people, I purposed to establish [lit. to cause it to be rooted] in one place the complete canonical decisions laid down by them, at the patriarchate here, in an elegantly fashioned book.⁵⁸

2. The Council of Manazkert

The Armenian and Syrian Jacobite Churches formed two large and neighbouring Churches in the Caliphate. The Syrian Julianist Church – a small splinter group of the main Syrian Monophysite Church – had friendly relations with the Armenian Church; for this reason, the rest of the Syrian Church (the Jacobites) regarded the Armenian Church as Julianist:

The people of Siwnik', Vaspurakan, Aluank' (Albania) Sasanunk' (inhabitants of Sasun) and the Jacobite Syrians were of one confession with apostolic foundation. Because of this the Syrians living near Sasun came to the Armenians and said, 'We are of the confession of Saint Gregory'; and they [the Julianist Syrians] received their ordination from them [i.e. from the Armenians], and there was no dispute between them, for this reason they were called Gregorians (*Grigorikk'*). At that time a priest called Baršapuh and a deacon called Gabriel from Mup'arkin, were tale-bearers between the Armenians and Syrians; they said that the Armenians are Julianists and that the Syrians said the body of Christ is corruptible.⁵⁹

To dispel the mistrust between the two Churches Catholicos Yovhannēs Ojneg'i, in cooperation with Patriarch Athanasius (724-740), convoked a council at Manazkert, in A. D. 726.⁶⁰ According to the Syrian sources, the council

⁵⁸ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. I, pp. 535 sq.

⁵⁹ Michael the Syrian, Armenian version, pp. 351 sq. Cf. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 492 sq.

⁶⁰ According to Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 496, the council was held in Seleucid year 1037 and AE 135; while the Armenian version, p. 352 gives the following dates: Seleucid 1037, AS 135 or AE 166. It is obvious that all of these dates do not synchronize, sel.1037=A. D. 726; AS 135= A. D. 686, and AS 166= A. D. 717; the last two seem to be confusions for AE 175 (ԺՀԵ)= A. D. 726. The Armenian historians give a number of dates, B. L. p. 223; Kirakos, p. 69; Menologium, Ms. Marsh, 438, vol. II, fol. 423^a put the council in AE 175/A. D. 726. Vardan, p. 73, in the days of ^cUmar II (717-720). Asotik, p. 103, puts it in the days of prince Smbat without giving an exact date (we know that Smbat died in A. E. 174/725-6, see *supra*, p. 295 n. 57). Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 66, in A. D. 719. Samuēl Anec'i, p. 87, in A. D. 727. Venice Ms. no. 240, *Oskep'orik I*, 15th-16th c., Sarghissian, *Catalogue*, vol. II, cols. 597 sq. puts the council in AS 177/728. An extensive discussion of the council is found in Tēr-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 70-80. Cf. Tournèize, *Histoire*, pp. 388-395; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 573 sq.

was held to settle the question of the corruptibility and incorruptibility of the body of Christ – i.e., to deal with the Julian Severian controversy.⁶¹ But according to the Armenian sources – with the exception of the Armenian version of Michael the Syrian and the reference in the manuscript Menologium of the fifteenth century – it was called to grapple with the problem of the spread of Chalcedonianism in Armenia.⁶²

Scrutinizing carefully both the Armenian and Syrian sources one sees that it was the Armenian Catholicos who took the initiative to convoke the council:

En apprenant ces choses [i.e., what the two talebearers were doing], Iwannis fut ému et stupéfait de l'audace de ces gens. Il écrivit une lettre au patriarche Athanasius et lui demanda de lui faire connaître sa foi...⁶³

...Alors, nous [i.e. Yovhannēs] avons ordonné qu'un synode des vénérables évêques s'assemblât dans le canton d'Apahounis au village de Manavazqerd...⁶⁴

This initiative, however, would have been of little avail if it had not been for the goodwill and cooperation of the Syrian Patriarch. Besides those mentioned above, it appears as though there were two other reasons for calling the council: first, an external one, to establish a union between the two churches; and second, internal one, to unify the Armenian Church and establish standard practices within it. Firstly, the Catholicos wanted to form a union with the Syrian Jacobite Church.

There came again unto us some men, six bishops from the Jacobite house, for the sake of making a union of confession among us, whose names are these: first, the bishop Constantine; second, the metropolitan of the city of Uthay; third, Šmawon the bishop of Xaṭan; fourth, T'ēodos the bishop of Gardmanic'; fifth, lord At'anas the bishop of Np'rkert; sixth, T'ēodoros the bishop of Amasia.⁶⁵

The fact that the main purpose for calling the council was to bring about a union between the two Churches is further confirmed by the spirit of the conference and the way in which both sides tried to gloss over their doctrinal and

⁶¹ Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 492 sq.; Armenian version, p. 352; Tēr-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, p. 72.

⁶² Asolik, p. 102; BL, p. 224; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 87; Vardan, p. 73; Hakob Karnec'i, Mž, vol. II, p. 558; Grigor Tat'ewac'i, p. 545; Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 66. Cf. Michael the Syrian, Armenian version, p. 352; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fol. 423^a.

⁶³ Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 493.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 496.

⁶⁵ BL, p. 224. Cf. Menologium, *op. cit.* vol. III, fol. 442. For a discussion of the names of the six Syrian bishops see Tēr-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 76 sq.; idem, *Patma-Banasirakan Hetazotut'yunner* (Erevan, 1971), pp. 59 sqq.

ecclesiastical differences, to the extent of even bending backward to find a solution:

Le catholicos qui était plus versé dans les Écritures et voulait arriver à l'union était très empressé... Dès lors on usa de prudence dans cette affaire, et les Syriens aussi bien que les Arméniens se conduisirent avec modération à l'égard des opinions qui n'étaient pas parfaites quant à la doctrine, et, se départissant un peu de la rigueur manifeste qui peut-être en aurait fait retourner plusieurs en arrière, ils définirent sous l'anathème ce qui, sans nuire à la vérité éloignait la doctrine perverse des hérétiques.⁶⁶

According to the Armenian version of Michael the Syrian, there were differences on feasts and rituals, but they disregarded these diversities and departed in love.⁶⁷

Secondly, the other purpose of the council should be seen in the context of the general activities of Catholicos Yovhannēs Ojneg'i, from the council of Dvin in A. D. 719 up to the council of Manazkert. It could be characterized as an attempt to unify and consolidate the position of the Armenian Church:

And they anathematized the Julianists and those who profess Christ corruptible, Baršapuh [Syr. Bar Ḥadbešaba] and Gabriel, and the followers of Ezr [Ezritsn]. And the Armenians became united in their confession of the truth; and the Jatobite Syrians became their allies.⁶⁸

Finally, before closing this section we need to ask two important questions that will help us clarify the picture of Church-State relations: why did the two Churches unite at this particular time in history? and why was the council held at Manazkert? The union could not have been brought about with the purpose only of settling the Julian-Severian controversy, nor yet of combatting Chalcedonianism in their respective regions, nor of unifying and strengthening their individual Churches. All of these could probably have been achieved independently. The above mentioned seem to be the immediate causes of the ecclesiastical union, could not there have been a more fundamental underlying reason? A careful analysis of the available data leads one to deduce with some justification, that the union was brought about because the two Churches needed to unite to be able to face the new threat of Islam. This is what Catholicos Nersēs III and Sahak III had tried to do by uniting with the Byzantine Church – an act that was politically suicidal – and now the same is attempted by

⁶⁶ Michael the Syrian, trans. Chabot, vol. II, pp. 494 sq.

⁶⁷ Tēr-Minassiantz, *Kirche*, pp. 75 sq.; Michael the Syrian, Armenian version, p.353.

⁶⁸ Michael the Syrian, Armenian version, p. 353.

Catholicos Yovhannēs III Ojnec’i, this time, however, with the Syrian Church. The Catholicos was bracing himself and the Armenian Church for an approaching conflict – an attempt to weather the impending storm of the rising power of Islam and the fanaticism generated because of it. Probably this is why the Armenian and Syrian Churches needed to become “allies”. The whole affair is symptomatic of the deteriorating relations between the Church and the Arab government. The only reference as to why the council was held at Manazkert is found in the history of the Syrian patriarch, where we read:

On convint de se rendre à Arzôn; mais les Arméniens en furent empêchés par leur général. Alors, le patriarche choisit six évêques qu’il envoya près du catholicos. Lorsqu’ils arrivèrent, le catholicos se réjouit de les voir et rassembla ses évêques...⁶⁹

Yovhannēs III in the Synodal letter says,

Selon la règle, nous avons dû vous demander de nous donner la définition de votre foi; vous l’avez écrite et nous l’avez remise par écrit. Alors, nous avons ordonné qu’un synode des vénérables évêques s’assemblât dans le canton d’Apahounis au village de Manavazqerd.⁷⁰

Because the city was located on the border between Hark’ and Apahunik’ the Armenian historians place it in one or the other of the two cantons.⁷¹ What does “par leur général” mean in the above quotation? Does it refer to Smbat Bagratuni, prince of Armenia, or to al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAmr al-Ṭā’ī, the Arab governor? The Syriac original reads *rav haylā dilehōn*.⁷² Chabot has taken it to mean Smbat Bagratuni and says he was a Dyophysite, which is why he tried to stop the Armenians for according to Asolik, the council took place during the rule of Smbat Bagratuni.⁷³ Marquart, on the other hand, presents the matter under a new light by asserting that Smbat himself was present at the council and had an argument with Stepanos the metropolitan of Siwnik’, presumably about the natures of Christ.⁷⁴ This view is open to question. We saw that Smbat Bagratuni

⁶⁹ Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 493.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 496.

⁷¹ Manazkert is placed in Hark’ and Apahunik’ by BL, p. 223; in Apahunik’ by Zenob Glak (Venice, 1889), p. 40; in Hark’ by Asolik, p. 103; and in Apahunik’ again by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, p. 200 sq. See also Marquart, *Südarmenien*, pp. 15, 78; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, pp. 328, 449 sq.

⁷² Since I do not read Syriac, for the translation of the words I am indebted to Mr. Philip Alexander, Lecturer in Jewish Studies, Manchester University, formerly a student at Pembroke College.

⁷³ Asolik, p. 103; Cf. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 493, n. 8.

⁷⁴ Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 449; Orbelean, pp. 97 sq.

died in AE 174/725-6,⁷⁵ the year of the council. Marquart places the disputation during the council, probably basing himself on the evidence of Orbelean, a historian of the end of the thirteenth century. Smbat became prince of Armenia in A. D. 692 and soon submitted to the Arabs. But as a result of the policy of Arabization, he and the Catholicos were regarded as dangerous elements and were dispatched to Damascus in fetters. Somehow on the way he escaped and led the rebellion against the Caliphate and after defeating the Arab army at Vardanakert took refuge in the Byzantine territory in A. D. 703.⁷⁶ Smbat may have nourished Chalcedonian tendencies during his sojourn in the Byzantine Empire (703-711/2). It is therefore more probable that he had the disputation between A. D. 703 and his final return to Armenia in 711/2, when he totally broke with the Emperor and the Byzantine Church. Even if he were still alive, we do not find any reference in the sources which indicate that Armenian *naxarars* along with Armenian clergy took part in the council. It is also open to question if Smbat had the authority to stop the Catholicos and the bishops from going to Arzôn – especially in the light of the attitude of the Arab government towards the *naxarars*.

It seems more likely that *rav haylā dilehōn* refers to the Arab governor of Armenia. According to Payne Smith, *rav haylā* means *dux, imperator, ἀρχιστράτηγος, στρατοπεδάρχης* and *ἑθνάρχης*.⁷⁷ The Arab governor at this time, al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAmr al-Taʿī, was a general and made incursions into al-Lakz;⁷⁸ he also made a census of the land, according to the Armenian sources. He could be taken as the *ἑθνάρχης* of Armenia. Moreover, *dilehōn* in no way says that the *rav haylā* himself was an Armenian but that he was the general or governor of the Armenians. In the light of the administrative and fiscal policies of al-Ḥārith, it could well be that the new governor did not want to let the Catholicos, the bishops and many of the important clergy to leave the country while he was conducting his census of the population and the cadastre of the land.

Since many of the decrees of Caliph ʿUmar II were reversed, Ḥārith might have abrogated the tax exemption of the Church, which ʿUmar II had restored and wanted to have all responsible clergy in the land so that his census could have been made easy, quick and comprehensive.

One can discern in what al-Ḥārith did a deterioration of the relations between the Armenian Church and the Arab administration. A note of caution,

⁷⁵ See *supra*, p. 295 n. 57.

⁷⁶ *Supra*, pp. 209 sq. 215-218, 236 sq.

⁷⁷ Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxford, 1901), vol. II, col. 3785.

⁷⁸ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 206.

however, is necessary to stop us from thinking that there was any deviation from the basic religious attitude of the Caliphate towards the Armenian Church. Though the administrative and fiscal policies underwent a drastic change, the religious policy remained constant. Probably Ḥārith reverted to the position at the time just before the Caliphate of ʿUmar II when Church property and wealthy clergymen were subject to taxation. Finally, it could well be that the old Arab policy of isolating the Christian people from one another to forestall any danger of a concerted action against the Islamic State, might have played an important part. A union between the Armenians and Syrians of any sort whatever was the last thing that the Arabs wanted to see, and therefore the Arab governor hindered them from going to Syria.

Nothing more is recorded about the life and activities of Yovhannēs III Ojneg'i. He had achieved much, he had exacted considerable concessions from the Caliphate and had seen with his own eyes the reversal of some of his achievements. He died in A. D. 728 after eleven years of patriarchate.

E – *Conclusion*

Catholicos Yovhannēs III Ojneg'i was a man of such immense intellectual stature and great administrative ability that he understood well the working of the Arab mind and the mechanism of the Arab government. He saw the increasing importance Islam was acquiring in the administration of the Caliphate. Though at the time it did not produce any fundamental change in the basic Arab religious policy in Armenia, except for occasional outbursts of fanaticism, yet these developments were a foretaste of things to come. Moreover, the declining power of the *naxarar* class within Armenia led to the situation where no indigenous prince of Armenia was tolerated and the land was governed directly by Arab officials. These were two new and formative factors that the Catholicos had to reckon with; and in his response to the historic challenge we can find the traces of the Millet system.

To forestall any Arab intervention in the life of the Church the Catholicos tried to make the Armenian Church totally anti-Chalcedonian; he had the council of Chalcedon officially condemned at the council of Manazkert and strove to eradicate all Chalcedonian practices in the Church; it seems as though his anti-Chalcedonianism was not a piece of obtuse dogmatism but a calculated political measure to protect the independence and national identity of the Armenian Church. Furthermore, he wanted to consolidate the Church from within so as to be able to withstand any onslaught from Islam. He therefore introduced disciplinary reforms against the clergy, unified the order of worship and regularized

the whole ritual of the Church. Thus, the policy inaugurated by Catholicos Sahak III Jorop'orec'i and vigorously enforced by his successor Ełia I Arčışec'i reached its culmination under Yovhannēs III Ojnec'i.

Internally the relation between the Church and *naxarars* continued to be guided by feudal interests of selfpreservation and autonomy. Seeing the inherent threat in the new Arab policy to the existence of the *naxarars*, he personally interceded for the freedom of the captives in Damascus. Realizing, however, that the general feeling against the *naxarars* was hostile, and in an attempt to find a new means of safeguarding the interests of the Church and the land, the Catholicos collected all the canons of the Armenian Church into a *corpus juris canonici* as the legal basis for the political and religious autonomy of Armenia.

Finally, Yovhannēs III gained two important concessions from the Caliph – namely, tax-exemption for the clergy and Church property, and freedom for political prisoners – thereby raising the administrative relations of Church and Caliphate to a hitherto unprecedented height. Towards the end of his life, however, he had the misfortune of seeing the slow deterioration of this relation because the successors of ʿUmar II reversed most of his policies. Before closing the chapter it is essential to repeat that as yet there was no change in the basic Arab religious principles in Armenia, a point which emerges most clearly from the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

THE FALL OF THE Umayyads AND THE ʿAbbāsīd Revolution

Upon the death of Yazīd II in Shaʿbān 105/January 724, his brother Hishām ascended the Caliphal throne and reigned for twenty years, till Rabīʿ II 125/February 745. It is generally accepted that after Muʿāwīya and ʿAbd al-Malik, Hishām was the third great Caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, and his reign marked the last period of Umayyad glory and prosperity.¹ He settled in Ruṣāfah, an old Roman settlement at the edge of the Syrian desert not far from Raqqah, thinking Damascus and the rest of the Syrian cities too unhealthy for residence.² As a Caliph, Hishām was totally different from his predecessor Yazīd II; he was much more “prudent and honourable and before all things a thorough business man. But he differed just as much from ʿUmar II, for he had no idealism about him.”³

His reversal of the fiscal policy of ʿUmar II, a change initiated by his brother, was not so much a religious act as a politico-administrative one. Many of the discriminatory restrictions imposed on the Christians during the reigns of ʿUmar II and Yazīd II were discontinued and he was very tolerant toward the Christians.

¹ Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, pp. 393 sq.; Ibn Qutaybah, *Maʿārif*, ed. Tharwat ʿUqāshah (Cairo, 1960), p. 365; Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, vol. V, p. 479; Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 325-352; F. Gabrieli, “Hishām”, *EI*², vol. III, pp. 493 sqq.

² On Ruṣāfah see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, vol. II, pp. 784 sqq.; Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 106. For a description of Ruṣāfah see Ibn Buṭlān’s description during his travel from Baghdad to al-Fuṣṭāṭ in 440/1049 via al-Rahbah and al-Ruṣāfah, “Raḥlat ibn Buṭlān ila al-shām”, ed. L. Cheikho, in *al-Mashriq*, vol. XXIII (1925), pp. 764 sqq.

³ Wellhausen, *op. cit.* p. 326. Brockelmann, *History*, p. 98, on the other hand, calls him an avaricious man who exploited the state and drove his governors into damaging extortions. H. A. R. Gibb, however, in his article, “The Evolution of Government in Early Islam”, *SI* (1955), no. iv, p. 7, disagrees with the above view and asserts, “By a general fiscal reorganization he removed the immediate grievances of the *mawālī* who had been supported in a large measure by religious sentiment, and apart from this he cultivated the religious leaders to a greater extent than his predecessors had done.” Unfortunately he gives no reference.

He restored to them (the Melchites?) the possession of the see of Antiochia, from which they had been debarred for 40 years, under the condition, certainly, that they chose as Patriarch not a learned and prominent man, but a simple monk, his friend Stephanus, to which they agreed. He took his own son Muḥammad severely to task for having had a Christian, by whom he thought himself insulted, flogged, instead of complaining of him before the Qadi.⁴

He himself resided most of the time in Ruṣāfah, a Christian town where the most prominent building was the church built by Emperor Constantine. Furthermore, his governor over Iraq, Khālīd ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Qasrī, probably influenced by his Christian mother, treated the Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians well, and employed them in government service. According to Ibn Khallikān:

Doubts were cast on the sincerity of Khālīd's religious belief, as he had built a church for his mother to pray in: it was alluding to this, that al-Farazdak said: God curse the camel which came with swinging trot, and bore to us Khālīd from Damascus.' How can he be an imām to the people, he whose mother believes not in the unity of God? He has built for his mother a convent, wherein is a cross; and through hatred, he has destroyed the minarets of mosques.⁵

A – *Catholicos Dawit' I Aramonec'i*

Dawit' I succeeded to the patriarchal throne after the death of Catholicos Yovhannēs III O necti, in A.D.728. Nothing is recorded about the circumstances of his election; the only biographical information is that he was from the village of Aramonk', a township belonging to the Church, for it was given by King Trdat to Gregory the Illuminator.⁶ Furthermore, there is very little about church affairs in the sources during his patriarchate, except for a short hagiographic source on the martyrdom of Vahan Golt'nac'i, which at best could provide us with a biased, totally anti-Arab point of view.⁷ In the absence of direct testimonies, we must turn to the indirect evidence in order to reconstruct the picture of Church-State relations, and we shall therefore examine the gen-

⁴ Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, p. 347; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6234, pp. 415 sq.

⁵ Translated by M. G. De Slane, *Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary* (Paris, 1842), vol. I, p. 485; Ibn Khallikan, Abū al-ʿAbbās Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr, *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, 1948), vol. II, p. 7. See also Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, p. 330; Hitti, *History*, p. 234.

⁶ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 105; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 87; Vardan p. 74; Asoḥik, p. 105. On Aramonk', a village in Kotayk' see Ep'rikean, *Bnašxarhik*, vol. I, p. 288, Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, pp. 455 sq.; Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 289.

⁷ Martyrology of Vahan Golt'nac'i, SH, vol. xiii (Venice, 1854).

eral events of the period in their historical perspective. The little information we have about Catholicos Dawit' I is that he did not reside in Dvin. According to John Catholicos:

And because of the heathen [Arab] inhabitants of the city of Dvin, the man of God Dawit' was extremely wearied, moreover they also harassed him with many evil crimes; being grieved he went out from their midst...built a church in the village of Aramonk' with beautifully proportioned decorations, and established around it a fittingly arranged dwelling place.⁸

It is necessary to raise two basic questions at this juncture: how strong was the harassment? and did the harassment represent a change in the Arab religious policy towards the Armenian Church? Taking the statement at its face value, one is tempted to conclude that the Catholicos was greatly inconvenienced and had to take refuge in his native village of Aramonk'. This view, however, cannot withstand closer scrutiny. There is no doubt that the local Arab inhabitants were causing trouble, but it is open to question if it was so intolerable. We have no contemporary Armenian historian who could give us a first hand account of the position. The earliest historian to write about the Arab domination, Lewond, was probably a little boy at the time and only wrote his history during the last quarter of the eighth century;⁹ it is interesting that he has nothing about the incident. The first to record the story was John Catholicos, who died in A. D. 931. He is quoted by two later sources: Samuël Anec'i, a chronicler of the twelfth century, and Vardan (d.ca.A. D. 1270).¹⁰ It appears as though John Catholicos was reading into the incident the bitter experiences he had suffered at the hands of the Arab colonizers and their *amirs*, rather than presenting the issue in an objective manner. We know that John Catholicos played a prominent role in the politics of his day: he was sent on a mission to *amīr* Yūsuf to entreat for an end to persecutions, and instead was thrown in jail and tortured.¹¹

To understand the situation in Dvin we must briefly consider the history of the city since the Arab domination. We saw how Dvin fell into the hands of invading Arab armies on 6 October 640; and when the Arabs were firmly in control of Armenia at the time of Caliph Mu^cāwiya, the city was turned into the

⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 105. Cf. Samuël Anec'i, p. 87; Vardan, p. 74.

⁹ See Thorossian, *Littérature*, pp. 108 sq.; Abelyan, *Erker*, vol. III, p. 474; V. Inglisian, "Die armenische Literatur", in *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, vol. VII, "Armenisch und kaukasische Sprachen" (Leiden, 1963), p. 177.

¹⁰ Both historians mention that they have utilized Drasxanakertc'i, Samuël Anec'i, p. 3; J. Muyldermans, *Domination*, p. 32.

¹¹ Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 210 sq.; Abelyan, *op. cit.* p. 480.

military and administrative centre of the land. Dvin, along with a number of other cities of the region – e.g., Partaw (Bardha^cah), P'aytakaran (al-Baylaqān), Tiflis, Karin (Theodosiopolis, Qālīqalā), Naxčavan, Manazkert and others – received an Arab garrison, thus forming part of the bulwark of Arab power in Caucasia. The city had a government house (*dār al-imārah*), a mosque, a mint and a state prison.¹² When ^cAbd al-^cAziz, the governor of Armenia, rebuilt and enlarged Dvin, most probably he brought Arab settlers who occupied whole quarters of the city.¹³ As a result of the influx of Arab elements, the Christian population of the city, especially the nobles, abandoned the place. By the third decade of the eighth century, Dvin had lost some of her Armenian character. Nevertheless, the majority of her inhabitants continued to be Armenians and they had the upper hand in the city till the beginning of the tenth century.¹⁴

According to Arab jurists the *ahl al-dhimma* were subject to certain legal disabilities and discriminating restrictions. The relation between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities were regulated according to special agreements.¹⁵ We have already seen that these injunctions were not strictly implemented, many churches were built by Christians after the conquest – even the governor of Iraq Khālīd al-Qasrī had built a church for his mother in Kufa, a predominantly Muslim garrison town.¹⁶ Moreover, Hishām was very tolerant towards the Christians and he himself resided in Ruṣāfah, a Christian town. Finally, we do not have any evidence that these discriminatory measures were fully enforced in Armenia at this time at least we have no allusions to such practices in the Armenian sources, except for the short period of fanaticism under Caliph Yazīd II.¹⁷

¹² See M. Canard, "Dvin", *EI*², vol. II, pp. 678 sq.; Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 182; Minorsky, *Studies*, pp. 117 sq. There must have been a state prison as well because after the burning of the *naxarars* in A. D. 705, *supra*, pp. 252 sqq., the Arabs gathered the remaining members of the *naxarar* dynasties in the jail of Dvin before taking them to Damascus in fetters.

¹³ Markwart, *Südarmerien*, p. 115; during the uprising of A. D. 775 we read that when the Arab inhabitants of Dvin heard the news of Abunčip's (Abū Najīb) defeat, they were so frightened that they cried and rent their clothes, and no one dared come out of the city. Lewond, pp. 139 sq.

¹⁴ Muqaddasī, p. 377, says that even in 4th c. Hijri/10th c. A. D., the Christians were more powerful in Dvin. The Catholicoi continued to reside in the city apparently undisturbed by the Muslim populace until A. D. 893 when a terrible earthquake destroyed the city; only then did the Catholicos officially transfer his residence to Nor-K'alak', see *supra*, p. 133 n. 161; Arcruni, p. 259; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 96; Drasxanakertc'i, pp. 162 sq.

¹⁵ Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, p. 127; Trad. no. 1708, Shaybānī, *Siyar*, trans. Khadduri, p. 277. See *supra*, p. 273 n. 8, 274 nn. 12-13.

¹⁶ *Supra*, p. 313 n. 5.

¹⁷ *Supra*, p. 293 sq.

Even if the Catholicos was disturbed in Dvin, it seems that it was a local issue and did not represent the inauguration of a new ecclesiastical policy. In contravention of all Arab discriminatory impositions and the stipulations of the treaties, Catholicos Dawit' I was able to build a beautiful church and a patriarchal residence in his native village of Aramonk' – not far from Dvin. Furthermore, we find that he could carry on his ecclesiastical responsibilities unmolested in visitations and celebrations throughout Armenia, for we read: "He [i.e., Vahan Goł'tnac'i] went and met the Catholicos in Vałaršapat city, and made known to him the tribulations he bore from the belligerent devil."¹⁸ The official patriarchate was in Dvin, he preferred to reside in his native village of Aramonk', and yet he was not afraid to go to Vałaršapat, probably for the celebration of a religious festival, where Vahan met him.

B - Arabo-Khazar Wars and the Resulting Change in Policy

The bone of contention between the Arabs and the seminomadic people living north of the Caucasian mountains was the control of the two passes – the Derbend, called by the Arabs Bāb al-Abwāb, and the Darial, known among the Arabs as Bāb al-Lān. The safety of the two contending sides depended on their ability to control these two important passes. The Caliphate in her fight for the mastery over the passes faced not only the Khazars but also the Byzantine Empire. The Darial pass was an important factor in the military strategy of the Byzantine Empire against the Caliphate for it was the only channel of direct contact between the Khazars and the Byzantine Empire.¹⁹ To check the Khazar threat both Caliphs Yazīd II and Hishām appointed a number of military governors over Armenia – such as al-Ḥārith ibn ʿAmr al-Ṭā'ī, al-Jarrāḥ ibn ʿAbdallah al-Ḥakamī, and Maslamah ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and Marwān ibn Muḥammad. It was only the last of these governors who was able to launch a large scale invasion of Khazaria and temporarily put an end to their encroachments.²⁰

The greatest set-back the Arabs suffered at the hands of the Khazars was the defeat and death of al-Jarrāḥ near Ardabil, in 112/730. The Khazars were so emboldened as a result of their victory that they overran Ādhārbayjān and Armenia, reached the shores of lake Urmia in Persia and penetrated as far south

¹⁸ Martyrology of Vahan Goł'tnac'i, p. 73; see *infra*, p. 328.

¹⁹ Czeglédy, "Khazar Raids", p. 77.

²⁰ For a description of the second Arabo-Khazar war and the various campaigns of the above mentioned generals between A. D. 722-757, see Dunlop, *Khazars*, pp. 58-87; Wellhausen, "Kämpfe", pp. 443 sq.

west as Diyar Bakr near Mawṣil.²¹ Moreover, there was a total breakdown of the administrative machine of the region; some of the cities, such as Khilāt,²² rebelled against the Arabs. On the home front in Armenia, benefitting from the situation, the romanophile Mamikonean *naxarar* dynasty tried to gain the upper hand, an act which brought them in direct conflict with the pro-Arab Bagratunis. It was at this time of military and administrative confusion that Caliph Hishām sent his half-brother Maslamah to Armenia to fight the Khazars. He was able to halt the Khazar inroads for a while, and reoccupied Derbend with its surrounding principalities.²³ However, he and the two generals accompanying him – Saʿīd ibn ʿAmr al-Ḥarashī (Jurashī) and ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Muslim al-ʿUqaylī – were not entirely successful in containing the Khazar tide.

Equally dangerous was the attitude of the indigenous princes who not only failed to support the Arabs, but on the contrary were a source of considerable embarrassment. This can be discerned from the manner in which Maslamah treated the local princes:

Maslamah made peace with the people of Khaizān, and by his order, its fort was dismantled. He appointed in it estates for himself... The Kings of al-Jibāl also made peace with him. The Shahs of Sharwān, Līrān, Tabarsarān, Fīlān and Jarshān presented themselves before him; and so did the chief of Maṣkat.²⁴

Dissatisfaction also spread throughout Armenia because of the new Arab administrative and fiscal policies, a fact that can be deduced from what Marwān ibn Muḥammad did when he first set foot in Dvin. Taxing the people out of existence, dismantling fortifications and expropriating property had alienated the inhabitants of the area.

²¹ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 206, trans. Hitti, p. 323; Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 1530 sq.; Ibn Khayyāt, vol. II, pp. 357, 377; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, pp. 117 sqq.; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6220, p. 407. On the area they overran see Lewond, pp. 101 sq.; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 501. See also Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 506; Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, pp. 109 sq.; and Dionysius of Tell-Maḥrē, p. 22.

²² Ibn al-Athīr, *ibid*, p. 118.

²³ According to Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 1531; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 118; Ibn Khayyāt, vol. II, pp. 357, 377 it was Saʿīd ibn ʿAmr al-Ḥarashī who was first sent to fight the Khazars and he defeated them. The same year Hishām dismissed Saʿīd and appointed his brother Maslamah to fight the Ehazars. Balādhurī, p. 206, trans. Hitti, pp. 323 sq. says that after the death of al-Jarrāḥ, Hishām appointed his brother Maslamah as governor of Armenia and “put at the head of the van of his [Maslamah’s] army Saʿīd ibn ʿAmr ibn-Aswad al-Jurashi.” Most probably Jurashī and Ḥarashī are the same man (the difference of a dot 2 - 2), and Balādhurī is trying to give a logical explanation of the sequence of events. See also Dionysius of Tell-Maḥrē, pp. 21 sq. Cf. Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 381 who puts the event in 107/725-726.

²⁴ Balādhurī, *ibid*, p. 207, trans. *ibid*, p. 324.

Besides the military defeat, the Arabs suffered a diplomatic set-back too. The traditional Byzanto-Khazar alliance against the Caliphate was more firmly cemented by the marriage of Constantine, son and heir of Emperor Leo III, with the daughter of the Khazar Khaqan, in A. D. 732; she took the Christian name Irene on her baptism.²⁵ Caliph Hishām, unhappy about the Byzantine diplomatic coup and the inconclusive outcome of the war, dismissed Maslamah and appointed Marwān ibn Muḥammad governor of Armenia in 114/732-3.²⁶

The central government had become suspicious of the Armenian *naxarars* who had grown restless because of the increase of the taxes following the census of al-Ḥārith and the reforms of al-Jarrāḥ. Nevertheless, Caliph Hishām saw the need of winning over the *naxarars* to be able to check the Khazar incursions and forestall another military and administrative breakdown, like the one that happened after the defeat and death of al-Jarrāḥ in 112/730. In other words, Hishām abandoned his original policy towards Armenia and reverted to the traditional one. When Marwān arrived in Dvin,

The Armenian *naxarars* presented themselves before him, and he spoke with them in peaceful terms, and called unto him Ašot, the son of Vasak of the Bagratuni house, gave him the dignity of patrician upon this our land of Armenia by the command of Hešm (Hishām), and raised him to the highest honour.²⁷

Unfortunately, however, with the appointment of Ašot Bagratuni, the rivalry between the Mamikonean and Bagratuni dynasties that had surfaced during the confusion after the defeat of A. D. 730 became more acute. The conflict was settled temporarily with the exile of the Mamikonean brothers, Grigor and Dawit', to Yemen.²⁸ After being established in his office, Ašot went to meet the Caliph personally "on account of the tyranny of this our land", and to plead

²⁵ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6224 (731-732), p. 409 sq. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 501 in 1042/731-732. Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 507 puts it in the eighth year of Hishām (8 Oct. 731-26 Nov. 732). Lebeau-St.Martin, vol. XII, pp. 173 sq.; and Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 157, give the date as A. D. 733. A. A. Vasiliev, *The Goths in the Crimea* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), p. 87; and K. H. Menges, *The Turkic Languages and Peoples* (Wiesbaden, 1968), p. 30 put it in A. D. 732. The latter date seems to be more acceptable because of the immediate reaction it produced in Caliph Hishām who dismissed his brother and sent Marwān ibn Muḥammad to patch up relations with the local princes and thus counter the diplomatic victory of the Emperor.

²⁶ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 207; Ya'qūbī, vol. II, p. 381 sq.; Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 1562; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, pp. 131 sq.; Ibn Khayyāṭ, vol. II, p. 359. Lewond, p. 112; Asoḥik, p. 130; Vardan, pp. 74 sq.; Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 507; Dionysius of Tell-Maḥré, p. 23.

²⁷ Lewond, *ibid*. Cf. Asoḥik, *ibid*; Vardan, *ibid*. See also Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 450; Toumanoff, *Studies*, p. 341.

²⁸ Lewond, p. 113; Vardan, p. 74.

for some basic concessions.²⁹ In order to win the loyalty and support of the Armenians, Hishām issued a special decree re-establishing the status of the Armenian cavalry and fixed an annual stipend of a hundred thousand *dinars*, backdating it for three years.³⁰ On his return Ašot, along with the rest of the *naxarars* and their cavalry, joined Marwān ibn Muḥammad in his attack against the Khazars that resulted in the occupation of their capital and the capture of much booty and slaves.³¹

The whole affair reflected the historical context of A. D. 650/2 – when the strategic position of Armenia rescued her from total political and military subjugation – and the treaty of T’ēodoros Ṛštuni with Muḥāwiya. Undoubtedly with the change of policy towards the *naxarars* there also ensued a change in the attitude towards the Church; though our sources are silent about the affairs of the Church, the martyrology of Vahan Golt’nac’i gives ample evidence for such an amelioration. We have no indication, however, concerning the attitude of the Church to the rift between the Mamikonean and Bagratuni dynasties. Judging from the character and personality of the Catholicos we could say that he tried to avoid the issue and adopted a neutral or even a passive stand. On the other hand, it could well be that the bishops of each house naturally backed their own patrons in their political views because of the feudal character of the Church.

C – *The Martyrdom of Vahan Golt’nac’i*

We saw earlier that among the Armenian captives taken to Damascus in A. D. 705, was a boy of four, Vahan the son of the prince of Golt’n. He was brought up in the religion of Islam and was given a new name, Vahap.³² When

²⁹ Lewond, *ibid.*

³⁰ One of the fundamental stipulations of the treaty between T’ēodoros Ṛštuni and Muḥāwiya, *supra*, pp. 110-116, was that the Armenians would keep 15,000 cavalymen and the money for their maintenance would come from the central treasury. However, with the change of the policy towards the *naxarars* in A. D. 705, *supra*, pp. 252 sqq., the stipends were suspended and the cavalry disbanded, but because of the Khazar threat the Arabs reconstituted the Armenian cavalry contingent as an auxiliary force, in A. D. 729/730, without any payment; hence Hishām backdated the payment to win the Armenians over and make them fight more effectively against the Khazars.

³¹ This campaign was in 119/737; for the Arabic text and a German translation of the campaign see Ibn Aḥṭam al-Kūfī, in Togan, *Ibn Faḍlān*, pp. 295 sqq. See also Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 208; Lewond, pp. 113 sq.; Dunlop, *Khazars*, pp. 81-5; Czégledy, “Khazar Raids”, pp. 77 sq. Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, pp. 132 sq., puts the story under year 114/732-3.

³² *Supra*, p. 261.

Caliph ʿUmar II freed the Armenian captives, Vahan was refused permission to return because he had attained a high office in the court and was well versed in the Qurʾān and the Traditions. However upon his persistence the Caliph allowed him to depart on condition that he would return as soon as he had set his affairs in order.³³ The return of Vahan to Armenia must have been sometime toward the end of A. D. 719.³⁴ While in Armenia, he became Christian:

At that time died the *amirapet* [Caliph], who let him go to his own land and commanded him to return unto him. Although he was set free of his contract [to return]³⁵ yet he was suspicious, since the Arabs [Tačikkʿ] dominated the land, lest anyone should denounce his return to Christianity; which indeed happened... For it was affirmed to the *amirapet* that he had returned to his Christian faith and disdained their religion; and by the order of the same they searched after him.³⁶

By the time the news of his apostasy reached the government and a search warrant against Vahan had been issued, Caliph Yazīd II had died also. Though his successor, Caliph Hishām, was no fanatic – on the contrary, he was well disposed towards the Christians and particularly towards the Armenians³⁷ – yet on account of his apostasy and by reason of the Islamic law, the Caliph was bound to find him and bring him to Justice.

When Vahan heard that the authorities were looking for him he knew well what awaited him, and so he planned to flee secretly to Byzantine territory. He was dissuaded by his wife and in-laws, and refrained from crossing the frontier. However, he could not live openly, “and thenceforth he had no respite and rest anywhere, but having left his wife with her family, he gave himself up to God’s will.”³⁸ Thus he became a fugitive and no one dared to help him openly for fear of government reprisal. According to the longer version of the martyrology, he

³³ Martyrology of Vahan Gołtʿnacʿi, p. 20. There are two versions of the martyrology; the second and shorter account, *ibid*, pp. 66 sqq., says it was Caliph al-Walīd who let Vahan return. See also Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fol. 384; Awgerean, *Varkʿ*, vol. I, p. 192.

³⁴ Martyrology of Vahan Gołtʿnacʿi, pp. 23, 71; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 580.

³⁵ His Arab-Muslim upbringing is clearly reflected in this very attitude – i.e., he felt relieved of his oath to return because the Caliph to whom he had sworn had died. The question was not one of allegiance but of apostasy. On apostasy see *supra*, pp. 212 sq., nn. 26-27.

³⁶ Martyrology of Vahan Gołtʿnacʿi, pp. 71 sqq. Cf. Awgerean, *Varkʿ*, vol. I, p. 195.

³⁷ *Supra*, pp. 325 sq.; the search for Vahan should have begun in A. D. 732, the year Marwān ibn Muḥammad came to Armenia. The Martyrology says his persecutions lasted five years (*ibid*, p. 77; Awgerean, *ibid*, p. 200) and he died in Ruṣāfah in E. E. 186/737, see *infra*, p. 330.

³⁸ Martyrology of Vahan Gołtʿnacʿi, p. 72; cf. Awgerean, *ibid*, p. 196; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, vol. II, fol. 384.

went to Iberia for a year and stayed there in hiding;³⁹ while another source records that he remained a year in Siwnik' and Vayoc' Jor.⁴⁰ It could well be that he stayed a year in Siwnik' before departing to Iberia, where the Arab hold was not as firm. Next we find him in the canton of Aragacotn. The *naxarars* of the canton were worried about his presence in their region, "lest he should be a cause for ruin." They even consulted the newly-appointed prince of Armenia, Ašot Bagratuni, as to what to do, and probably on his advice told him plainly to go away.⁴¹ Not knowing where to go or what to do, he went to Vałaršapat (Ėjmiacin) to meet the Catholicos and "made known to him the tribulation that he bore from the belligerent devil". The Catholicos ordered him, "Go to a monastery somewhere, for fear that you may cause harm to others."⁴²

Thence he went to a monastery in Širak and stayed there six months. But the lady of the province was not pleased to welcome such a person in her district; she demanded that the monks send him away, saying: "Let him go and depart from your midst, lest he should be a cause of perdition for himself and for you."⁴³ Vahan had to leave Širak too. He then went to an obscure monastery with few monks, where he resided for a year, in prayer and fasting.⁴⁴ While residing in this monastery he made up his mind to return to the Caliphal court and confess Christ openly. Before taking his leave he asked the monks to pray for him so that the Lord would give him the courage to stand firm in his faith. He first went to Siwnik' to bid farewell to his dear ones. On the way he lodged at the following monasteries; Yovhanna Vank' in Aragacotn, T'elenik' in Nig and the great monastery of Mak'enoc' in Gełark'uni.⁴⁵ The abbot of the last, called Sołomon, encouraged him to be steadfast and gave him provisions and

³⁹ Martyrology of Vahan Golt'nac'i, p. 26 sq.

⁴⁰ Menologium, *op. cit.*; Awgerean, *op. cit.*

⁴¹ Martyrology of Vahan Golt'nac'i, *op. cit.* pp. 27 sq.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 29. Cf. Awgerean, *op. cit.* p. 197. Ormanean, vol. I, col. 587 thinks it is the monastery of Xnckonk'.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 29 sq.

⁴⁵ According to the Menologium, *op. cit.* fol. 384^b, he returned from the monastery of Mak'enoc'ac' back to T'elenik' and Yovhanna Vank', whose abbot was called Yovhannēs. The shorter version of the martyrology (p. 76), says he went to the monastery of Sovi whose abbot was called Yovhannēs; Awgerean (*op. cit.* p. 199), on the other hand, says that he went from Mak'enoc'ac' monastery to that of T'elenik' whose abbot is also called Yovhannēs. However, all the above mentioned sources finally agree that he went to Bznunik'. It is obvious that there is a confusion at this point because of the name Yovhannēs; it seems doubtful that he retraced his steps to Yovhanna Vank'. It is more likely that he continued straight on to the monastery of Sovi, whose abbot was called Yovhannēs.

clothing for the journey to Ruṣāfah. After seeing his dear ones in Siwnik', Vahan left for Syria and stayed for a while at the monastery of Eraṣxawor, near the village of Arjkē in Bznunik'.⁴⁶ Its abbot, Artawazd, received him with great honours, and let one of the monks go with him as a companion and servant as long as he desired. Artawazd could not have done so unless the Armenian clergy – in particular the monks – enjoyed a great degree of freedom; and freedom of movement is directly linked with freedom from taxation. Thence the two went to Urha,⁴⁷ where Vahan venerated the icon of our Lord, and crossing the Euphrates near Raqqa (Callinicos) they headed for Ruṣāfah.

Before entering the city Vahan dismissed his companion and went alone to the Caliphal palace to announce his arrival. His former colleagues at the palace tried to prevail upon him through promises and threats to give up his Christian faith and return to Islam. Vahan, however, remained steadfast in his convictions and in accordance with the Islamic law he was thrown in jail for three days, giving him a second chance to think over his decision. When he again refused to abjure his Christian faith he was beheaded on Easter monday, 27 Mareri AE 186/18 March 737.⁴⁸ The significance of the story does not end here for our purposes: according to the martyrology the Byzantines (horomi, i.e. Greek Orthodox Church), the Jacobites and the Nestorians could not agree as to who should bury the saint – obviously there were no Armenians at Ruṣāfah then. They finally agreed to bury him together and build a splendid martyrion over his tomb.⁴⁹

Leaving aside the details and miraculous happenings, a number of important facts emerge that elucidate Church-State relations at the time. First, the search for Vahan was not rigorous because he could evade his pursuers for five years. Secondly, one is immediately struck by the number and wealth of the monasteries that still existed in Armenia at the time, and the degree of freedom

⁴⁶ Martyrology of Vahan Goṭ'nac'i, pp. 33 sq., 37; Awgerean, *Vark'*, vol. I, p. 200; Menologium, Ms. Marsh 438, fol. 384^b. On Arjkē and Eraṣxavor see Inčičean, *Storagrut'iwn*, pp. 122 sq.; Hakobyan, *Aṣxarhagrut'yun*, pp. 164, 172 sq.

⁴⁷ Urha, also known as Urfa, Edessa and al-Ruhā' is situated on the head waters of a tributary of the Balikh river. It is a Christian town famous for the number of its churches; Yāqūt, *Buldān*, vol. II, pp. 876 sqq. Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 103 sq.

⁴⁸ Martyrology of Vahan Goṭ'nac'i, p. 50, puts the martyrdom on 17 March, Monday of the passion week; the shorter version, *ibid*, p. 88, says it was on Easter Monday, 27 Margac'; Awgerean, *op. cit.* p. 209, puts it on 25 Margac' 186/7=Monday, 14 April 738; Synaxarion, PO, vol. XXI, p. 214 puts the event on 20 Areg/28 March; Mxit'ar Ayrivanec'i, p. 67 gives the year only AE 186/737. See also Dulaurier, *Recherches*, p. 242; Ormanean, vol. I, col. 589.

⁴⁹ Martyrology of Vahan Goṭ'nac'i, pp. 52 sqq., 89 sqq.; Awgerean, *ibid*, pp. 209 sq.

they enjoyed. The Arabs did not interfere in the affairs of the monasteries, on the contrary we see that it was the Armenian princes who forced the monasteries to turn Vahan out. Despite the dark picture given by the historians, the Armenian Church evidently fared rather well during the Caliphate of Hishām. Thirdly, despite the fanaticism of Yazīd II and his command to destroy all icons and images, the icon of our Lord was still the object of adoration in Edessa. Fourthly, though Vahan was an apostate and a criminal in the eyes of the government, nevertheless he was allowed to be buried with Christian rites and was not disposed of by the government. Finally, the Christians of Ruṣāfah were allowed to build a splendid martyrion in the very city where the Caliph was residing. From what we have said above we could conclude that the martyrdom of Vahan did not signify a change in the religious policy of the Caliphate in Armenia. Caliph Hishām had clearly abandoned his earlier policy and revived the old treaty between Mu^cāwiya and T'ēodoros Rštuni, and the Church once again enjoyed great freedom.

Catholicos Dawit' II Aramonec'i died in A. D. 741, after 13 years of patriarchate. Comparing his life and achievements with those of his predecessor, one is greatly disappointed; his departure from Dvin because of the vexations of the local Arabs, the advice he gave to Vahan Goł'nac'i, and the silence he kept over the rift between the Bagratids and Mamikonids are all indicative of the personality of the Catholicos, who preferred to opt out of a difficult situation than face the challenge directly.

D – The ^cAbbāsīd Revolution

Caliph Hishām died in Rabī II 125/February 743. His three successors – al-Walīd II (745-4), Yazīd III (744) and Ibrāhīm (744) – were weak and had short rules. When al-Walīd II was killed by his pursuers at the fort of Bakhrā near Palmyra, on Thursday 27 Jumādā II 126/17 April 744,⁵⁰ Marwān ibn Muḥammad, the governor of Armenia, proclaimed himself the avenger of his blood and the protector of his two sons. He left in Armenia as governor Ishāq ibn Muslim al-^cUqaylī and departed with his armies to Syria. On 26 Ṣafar 127/7 December 744 he entered Damascus and received the homage of the city as the new Caliph.⁵¹ Marwān faced four redoubtable threats to his regime and the

⁵⁰ Ṭabarī, vol. II, pp. 1799 sq., 1810; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 209; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 400; Ibn Khayyāṭ, vol. II, pp. 380 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, pp. 210 sq.

⁵¹ Ṭabarī, vol. II, p. 1890; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 403 sq.; Ibn Khayyāṭ, vol. II, pp. 392 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 245; Mas^cūdī, vol. VI, pp. 46 sq.

Umayyad dynasty as a whole: the strong discontent among the pious elements who regarded the Umayyads as impious secular kings (*mulūk*), the strong Arab centrifugal tribal spirit known as *al-ʿAṣabiya*, the Shīʿa challenge to the legitimacy of the Umayyad dynasty, and the ʿAbbāsi-Hāshimī Daʿwa (propaganda mission). The last two, through historic accident, joined forces. In Ramaḍān 129/May-June 747, a bloody civil war began, and Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī led the ʿAbbāsid forces from the east against the Umayyads. Marwān ibn Muḥammad could not stand against them; the Umayyad armies under the command of the Caliph's son ʿAbd Allāh suffered a crushing defeat near Shahrazūr on the Lesser Zāb river in 131/749; and Marwān himself was defeated the following year on the Greater Zāb river. These defeats sealed the fate of the Umayyad Caliphate; the defeated Caliph fled to Egypt pursued by his enemies and was finally killed at Būṣīr on 5 August 750. In the meantime in 132/749 Abū al-ʿAbbās was proclaimed the first ʿAbbāsid Caliph in Kufa and took the title of al-Saffāḥ (the blood shedder).⁵²

In Armenia, on the other hand, things were likewise not very quiet. Catholicos Dawit' I was succeeded by Trdat I Ot'msec'i (741-764).⁵³ Except for his birthplace very little is found in the sources about his life and works. The political turmoil within Armenia and the civil war among the Arabs occupy all the space. While the troubles were brewing in 743, al-Walīd II freed the two Mamikonean brothers from Yemen but before their arrival in Armenia the Caliph was assassinated.⁵⁴ When the two brothers came to Armenia they began to oppose Ašot Bagratuni openly. Marwān, who had just ascended the throne, ordered Dawit' to be executed for his insubordination,⁵⁵ thus further polarizing the feudal relations in Armenia and alienating many of the *naxarars* from the Caliphate. The eruption of the open hostilities in 123/747 served as a signal for the Armenian princes, Grigor Mamikonean, pinning his hopes on the Byzantine armies in Pontus, unfurled the banner of rebellion.⁵⁶ The rebels invited Ašot, the prince of Armenia, to join their ranks. Ašot, seeing the unanimity of the *naxarars* and their cavalry, was reluctant to join them and he called

⁵² Ṭabarī, vol. III, pp. 27-33; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, pp. 417 sq.; Ibn Khayyāṭ, vol. II, pp. 434 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 312; Masʿūdī, vol. VI, pp. 87 sq., 98. For an extensive discussion of the ʿAbbāsid revolution see Wellhausen, *Kingdom*, pp. 370-566. For somewhat a different view see M. A. Shaban, *The ʿAbbāsid Revolution* (Cambridge, 1970), *passim* (esp. pp. 138-163); *idem*, *Islamic History*, pp. 165-189.

⁵³ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 105; Vardan, p. 74; Asoḥik, p. 105; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 87.

⁵⁴ Lewond, p. 118.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 121 sq.; Vardan, p. 75.

the *naxarars* one by one and tried to dissuade them from such an adventure, saying:

Behold our forces are few in number among the forces of the Ismaelites and we do not possess the power either to resist their armies or pull our land out of the mouth of the dragons. And we only bring trouble and misfortune by our designs. But if you intend to accept my advice, let us not do that thing and let us remain subject to them, as we were subject until now, and we may retain our possessions, vineyards, woods and our cultivated lands.⁵⁷

The rebels were in no mood to listen to sensible advice, but they gave him an ultimatum and compelled him into complicity. When Ašot tried to withdraw from the conspiracy and remain loyal to the Arabs, the rebels captured him and had him blinded. The pro-Byzantine party thus deprived Ašot of the possibility of any further active role. Nothing is said about the attitude of the Church or the Catholicos to the rebellion or the mutilation of Ašot Bagratuni. Even if Catholicos Trdat had tried to intervene, it is very doubtful if the rebels were at all inclined to hearken to his counsel. If we take the attitude of Lewond – a contemporary of the events – as reflecting the official view of the Church, though vehemently anti-Islam, he is also totally opposed to the uprising, a fact which is strikingly apparent in the manner in which he pictures the movement:

And all the sons of iniquity went and joined the rebel army; men who did not know the fear of God, neither the fear of princes, nor the reverence of elders, but like pagans and strangers went marauding and took captive their brothers and compatriots, pillaged, and with torture and bastinados brought suffering upon their brothers.⁵⁸

Moreover, being the historian of the Bagratuni house he pictures Ašot's mutilators in the darkest colours and greatly deploras their crime; he laments, saying, "And thenceforth the glory of our Armenian nation was taken away." Soon, however, Grigor fell ill and died in Karin. Lewond saw in it the divine judgement for his sins, and in the same breath justified Ašot's treachery in breaking his oath and withdrawing from the alliance.

For three years Armenia was independent, led by the Mamikonean dynasty. The Armenian sources are completely silent about the affairs of the Church during that time; the only information about the Catholicos is given by the Arab Christian historian Agapius:

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 122.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 123.

And in this year [ca. A. D. 750/1] Kūsān the Jāthliq⁵⁹ [i.e., catholicos] took the mass of the inhabitants of Armenia and led them to the land of the Romans.⁶⁰

This piece of information seems somewhat confused, for there was no Catholicos of Armenia called Kūsān. It could be that Agapius is confusing the exodus of the Armenians – probably under the leadership of the Byzantine Armenian general of the same name – with a mass exodus under the leadership of the Catholicos.

We have repeatedly pointed out that the Umayyads and their governors in general, as true Arab aristocrats, paid little attention to religion and its promotion. Their conduct was often outrageously irreligious and they did not care if their subjects were no better. Arab nationalism was the corner stone of the Umayyad Caliphate, with the purely Arab tribesmen and the Syrian *Jund* forming her fighting machine. The guiding principle of the Caliphate was the interest of the ruling dynasty which was often identified with the interests of the State. The most important and profitable posts were in the hands of the members of the Umayyad dynasty who were mostly men of worldly disposition. Hence, the interests of religion were relegated to a secondary position which directly contradicted the ideology of Islam. The Umayyad Caliphate, therefore, could be characterized, as Wellhausen has rightly pointed out, by the title of “Arab Kingdom”.⁶¹ The ^cAbbāsīd revolution signalled the transition from this Arab semi-secular kingdom to the Islamic Empire. The ^cAbbāsīds were regarded as the embodiment of the true conception of the Caliphate, a theocracy with Islam as her keynote. But this religious emphasis was more apparent than real; the ^cAbbāsīd Caliphs let things take their natural course and they themselves were as worldly as their predecessors. There was, however, one basic difference; the Umayyad Caliphate was purely Arab while the ^cAbbāsīd was more cosmopolitan, where Arab and client (*mawla*) were on an equal footing. The defence of the state was no more in the hands of the Arab *muqāṭilah* or the Syrian *jund* but Khurāsānī mercenaries who fought for money.

⁵⁹ A. A. Vasiliev, PO, vol. VIII, p. 531 translates it as “Chef arménien”. On the meaning of Jāthliq see *supra*, p. 245 n. 31.

⁶⁰ Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 531. Cf. Dionysius of Tell-Mahré, p. 56 says, “L’an 1065 (753-754), toute la région septentrionale fut pillée par Koušan. Cet homme était arménien de l’Arménie IV^e. Après la défaite et la fuite de Merwan, il prit ses biens et sa famille et entra dans le pays des Romains... Constantin le fit général.”

⁶¹ Wellhausen, *Kingdom, passim.*; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. II, pp. 40 sqq. See *supra*, p. 270.

E – *Conclusion*

Hishām was a prudent and capable Caliph. He was no religious fanatic and his interests were to keep the Umayyads at the helm of power and to put the finance of the Caliphate on a firm base. Though during the first six years of his reign he abrogated the rights and privileges of the *naxarars* and the clergy, but when faced with the Byzanto-Khazar threat, he revived the old Arabo-Armenian treaty between Mu^cāwiya and T'ēodoros Rštuni. Thus once again Church-Arab government relations were restored to the old positive footing.

Catholicos Dawit' I, on the other hand, seems to have been a man of weak personality who could not exploit the situation for the benefit of the Church. He preferred to withdraw from ominous situations rather than face the challenge directly; hence he left Dvin, advised Vahan to hide in a monastery and allowed the rift to widen between the two rival parties in Armenia.

Umayyad religious policy did not undergo any change during Hishām's Caliphate. Leaving aside the short interlude at the beginning of his reign, the Church enjoyed all the privileges and freedom she possessed at the beginning of the Arab domination. The number and prosperity of monasteries at the time are testimonies to this fact. The martyrdom of Vahan Golt'nac'i should be seen in the framework of the Islamic law of apostasy and not as a sign of religious intolerance.

The ^cAbbāsīd revolution was the genesis of a new era in the history of the Caliphate, when the purely Arab stage came to a close and a more cosmopolitan administration was inaugurated.

CHAPTER VII

THE EARLY [°]ABBĀSIDS AND CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS

The question of Church-State relations in Armenia under the [°]Abbāsīd Caliphate is large enough to form the subject of a further dissertation. Without attempting in the present work to exhaust the field or enter into minutiae, we shall merely indicate the main features of Church-State relations under the early [°]Abbāsīds until the Caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd (Rabī I. 170/Sept. 786-Jumada II. 193/March 809), so as to clarify by way of contrast the situation under the Umayyads.

I – The First Two Caliphs and Church-State Relations

A – The Caliphate of Abū al-[°]Abbās al-Saffāh

Abū al-[°]Abbās inherited the Caliphate in a ruined state. The prolonged civil war had reduced the treasury to bankruptcy, destroyed the fortifications, made roads insecure because of brigandage and ruined the administrative machinery. To put the Caliphate back on her feet Abū al-[°]Abbās had to recover those regions – such as Armenia – that had rebelled, and expel from the rest pockets of Umayyad resistance or rebellious elements. This task he entrusted to his brother Abū Ja[°]far, later the second [°]Abbāsīd Caliph known as al-Manṣūr (rendered victorious by God). The Caliph first appointed him governor over al-Jazīrah, al-Mawṣil, Ādhārbayjān and Armenia.¹ Abu Ja[°]far came to Armenia in 132/750, suppressed the rebellion and reorganized the administrative machinery:

He [i.e. Abū Ja[°]far] ill-treated everyone with excessive sufferings and afflictions, and caused them to descend into the misery of poverty, to the extent of even demanding tribute from the dead. He also cruelly oppressed all the multitude of

¹ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p.209; Ya[°]qūbī vol. II, p. 430; Ṭabarī vol. III, pp.57 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 334. Lewond, p. 127; Asolik, p. 131; Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 532. Laurent, *Arménie*, p. 340; Grousset, *Histoire*, p. 320.

orphans and widows, tortured the priests and the servants of the divine altar with torments and cudgels, and with lashes of contempt, to reveal the names of the dead and their families. He also maltreated the inhabitants of this our land with impetuous and harsh exactions, taking for each person much *zuzēs*² of silver, and affixed a leaden seal to the neck of all men. And the family of the *naxarars*... redoubled giving gifts of horses and mules, also of excellent robes and other stores of gold and silver...And when he departed from this our land, he left as governor over this our land of Armenia Ezit the son of Usagi [Yazīd ibn Usayd al-Sulamī].³

This picture is also confirmed by a Christian Arab historian who says: “Then ^cAbdallah al-Manṣūr entered Armenia and imposed the *jizyah* on the nobles (*aḥrār*), confiscated their property and humiliated them with terrible degradation.”⁴

We saw earlier that Caliph Hishām was the first to introduce poll tax and land tax in Armenia, but faced with the Byzantino-Khazar threat he had to drop the whole scheme.⁵ However, when Abū Jaʿfar came to Armenia he revived the old principle. Lewond reports that it was not Armenia alone that groaned under his exactions but all the lands that he subdued. Because of his excessive love of ma-mmon his own people called him “Father of Dang” (հայր դանգի *أبو الدوانق*) for he honoured the *dang* more than God.⁶

It was during Abū Jaʿfar’s campaign in Armenia that the ^cAbbāsids decided their strategy towards the Armenian feudal lords and their factions. They, like the Umayyads, were opposed to the Mamikonean dynasty because of their romanophile sympathies. On the other hand, they were also suspicious of the Bagratunis for their loyalty to the Umayyads. However, when it came to the point, like their predecessors they favoured the Bagratuni dynasty:

And Ezit appointed as prince, from the princes of Armenia, over this our land, Isahak the son of Bagarat of the same princely house of Ašot, who was his cousin...Thenceforth the money that came annually from the Porte [i.e., the public treasury] for the Armenian forces, was stopped.⁷

² Zuzē – silver money, in Syriac *zūzā*, silver money with the fourth of the value of the sacred shekel among the Jews. Gr. δραχμή and Arab. درهم.

³ Lewond, pp. 127 sq.

⁴ Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 532.

⁵ *Supra*, pp. 322 sq.

⁶ Dang or Dank – mite penny, obol; a Pahlavi loan word *dāng*; per. د انك; half of a dirham; Ar د انق 1/6 of a dirham.

⁷ Lewond, p. 128. Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 81, says Yazīd was appointed in 134/July 751-July 752. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 209 sq. says al-Manṣūr appointed Yazīd after becoming Caliph, in A. D. 754; Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 446 says Abū Jaʿfar appointed Yazīd over Armenia and he was still in Armenia during the Khazar raid (i.e., A. D. 762-764) see *infra*, pp. 347 sq.

The ʿAbbāsids thus put an end to the Umayyad policy of subsidizing the Armenian cavalry, and the *naxarars* were to clothe, equip, feed and pay their salaries from their own pockets, a prospect which was not very pleasing to the Armenian princes. Furthermore, they were careful not to appoint as prince a member of Ašot's own family but that of his cousin, a significant interference in the feudal-dynastic structure of the Bagratuni house.

In 134/752 Emperor Constantine V Copronymus (741-775) occupied Karin (Theodosiopolis, Qālīqalā, now Erzerum), razed its walls to the ground, took all its treasures and retreated.⁸ Most of the Arab inhabitants of the city and its surrounding regions were either taken captive or killed, while the Armenian inhabitants were transported to Thrace, and probably some of the Armenian population of the neighbouring cantons voluntarily followed the retreating imperial armies.⁹ The mass deportation made the condition of those remaining behind even worse. Yazīd immediately marched on the city, appointed tax-collectors and task masters to round up labourers and rebuilt the walls of the city by corvée. But even more calamitous was the fact that Yazīd brought a great number of Arab tribesmen and made them settle in place of the deported Armenians to strengthen the defences of the Caliphate. The subsistence of the new Arab settlers was to be provided by the remaining Armenian population of the region.¹⁰ The influx of such large Muslim elements, in what were mostly Christian areas, made the task of the Church much more difficult. With the introduction of the Arabs, undoubtedly, the question of social and religious relations between the two communities arose on the local level; whereas in the beginning the Christians were unhampered in practising their religion, now they were subjected to restrictions.

⁸ On the occupation of Karin see Lewond, pp.129 sq.; Asohik, pp.132,142; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p.199; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 343; Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6243, p. 427.

⁹ According to Lewond, p.129, "Many of the inhabitants of the cantons asked the Emperor, so that they might throw off the iron collar of servitude of the Ismaelites and follow him". Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A. M. 6247, p. 429 says the Emperor settled the Syrians and Armenians from Melitene and Theodosiopolis in Thrace and these new settlers spread the Paulician heresy. Since no Armenian or Arab historian mentions the place where these people were taken – voluntarily or involuntarily – Theophanes' statement seems to be the most acceptable. Lewond's statement can be only partially true in so far as some may have followed voluntarily.

¹⁰ Lewond, p. 130; Asohik, p. 132; Agapius, *PO*, vol. VIII, p. 539; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 522. Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 372 says that Sālīḥibn ʿAlī rebuilt the walls of Malaṭyah in 138/June 755-June 756, and the following year he ordered the rebuilding of Qālīqalā and ordered that a garrison from the people of al-Jazīrah be settled in it to defend the city.

B – *The Caliphate of Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr*

In Dhu al-Hi-jah 136/May-June 754 Abū al-ʿAbbās died at al-Anbār and was succeeded by his brother al-Manṣūr. The change of Caliphs brought no amelioration to Armenia. The situation both in Armenia and Syria deteriorated greatly.¹¹ The increase in taxes and the abrogation of the rights and privileges of the *naxarars* and the clergy, created an explosive situation in Armenia. Prince Sahag Bagratuni and Catholicos Trdat vigorously protested to the central administration against the excesses of the local Arab officials. Their remonstrances fell on deaf ears, in part, no doubt, because at this time Emperor Constantine had returned to Constantinople and the border regions were firmly back under Arab control, and more probably because the Arabs were on good terms with the Khazars. According to al-Balādhurī, Yazīd ibn Usayd married the daughter of the King of al-Khazar on the command of the Caliph. Ibn Aʿtham al-Kūfī has preserved al-Manṣūr's letter on the question which could well be genuine for it reflects the real political situation of the time:

Armenia cannot continue to exist and prosper unless a marriage league is established with the Khazars. It is, therefore, my opinion that a covenant by marriage must be established in order that the country may prosper. Otherwise, I have fears, because of the Khazars, regarding the safety of you and all your officials. They come together, whenever they will, and prevail.¹²

The date of this marriage must be after the retreat of the Emperor in A. D. 754/5 and before the Khazar attack of 145/ April 762-March 763. Since, according to Ibn Aʿtham, the Khazar princess lived two years and four months before her death, then probably the marriage took place some time in A. D. 759¹³.

However, soon things changed. Yazīd's wife died during childbirth and the peace between the Khazars and the Caliphate came to an end. The Khazars were suspicious and in A. D. 762 they invaded Caucasia. There were two main incursions, the first was in A. D. 762 and the second two years later. A number of Arab generals were dispatched against the Khazars: Ḥarb ibn ʿAbdallāh al-Rawandī, Jibr'īl ibn Yaḥya and Mūsa ibn Kaʿb were all defeated, and it was Ḥumayd ibn Qaṭṭabah who was finally able to check the Khazars in 148/

¹¹ Lewond, pp. 155 sq.; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 522; Dionysius of Tell-Maḥrē, pp. 150 sqq.

¹² Czeglédy, "Khazar Raids", p. 79. See also Togan, *Ibn Faḍlān*, pp. 120 sq. Lewond, p. 132 says Yazīd married Xat'un, the sister of the Khazar King. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 210; Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 5 sq. n. 1, 416 sq.

¹³ Czeglédy, *ibid*, pp. 80 sq.; Dunlop, *Khazars*, pp. 179 sqq.

/Feb.765-Feb.766.¹⁴ The wars against the Khazars and the coming of the generals had a great effect on Armenia. In times of war taxes were naturally increased, and the defeated Arab armies ill-treated the local population. It was during the second Khazar incursion in A. D. 764 that Catholicos Trdat I Ot'msec'i died.

Trdat I was a man of stronger character than his predecessor. His whole patriarchate was strewn with bloodshed and repression. He did not shrink back from the difficulties. Most probably he did try to avert the uprising of A. D. 747, but the leaders of the uprising who were unwilling to listen to the advice of the prince of Armenia would have hardly paid any attention to what the Catholicos had to say. He cooperated closely with prince Sahak Bagratuni in a joint effort to protect the people against oppression and he did not hesitate to raise his voice in protest against the injustice of the Arab officials. Due to the sparseness of historical data at our disposal it is difficult to shed any further light on the problem of Church-State relations during the long patriarchate of Trdat I Ot'msec'i (742-764). He was succeeded by his namesake Trdat II of Dasnawor in Turuberan (764-767). The short patriarchate of Trdat II was, like that of his predecessor, a chain of tragedies. Very little is recorded about his patriarchate in the sources except that he was Catholicos for three years and was succeeded by Sion I Bawonecti (767-775).¹⁵

The situation in Armenia deteriorated to such a degree that there was talk of an uprising. When the Caliph heard the rumours, because of the Byzantine and Khazar threat, he dismissed Yazīd and appointed Bakkār ibn Muslim al-^cUqaylī.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 318 speaks of a Khazar invasion in 145/762-763, *ibid*, p. 328 says in 147/764-765 the Turks made an incursion and *ibid*, p.353 says al-Manṣūr sent gumayd ibn Qaḥṭabah to Armenia to fight the Turks in 148/Feb. 765-Feb. 766. Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 446 sq. speaks of a Khazar incursion in 141/758-759. Ibn al-Athīr, vol. V, p. 437 records a Khazar incursion in 145/762-763. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, vol. I, p. 433 puts the invasion in A. M. 6255/ 762-763. Agapius, PO, vol. VIII, p. 543 puts the invasion in the ninth year of al-Manṣūr (March 762-February 763). Michael the Syrian, vol. II, p. 522 puts it in 1074/763-764. Bar Hebraeus, trans. Budge, p. 114 puts it in 762/3. See also Lewond, pp. 132 sq., trans. pp. 128 sq. Thus the two most likely dates are A. D. 762 and 764. For an extensive discussion on the two incursions see Czeglédy, *ibid*, pp. 81-88; Dunlop, *ibid*, pp. 180 sq.

¹⁵ Draxanakertc'i, p.105; Asoḥik, p. 105; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 88; Vardan, p. 75; Kirakos, p. 71.

¹⁶ Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 210, puts them in the following order, ibn Usayd, Bakkār ibn Muslim al-^cUqaylī and Ḥasan ibn Qaḥṭabah. Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 447 says nothing about Bakkār's short rule and puts Ḥasan ibn Qaḥṭabah after ibn Usayd. The Armenian historians Lewond, p. 136 and Vardan, p. 75, give the following order, Yazīd, Bakkār and Ḥasan. We have numismatic evidence that Bakkār was in Armenia in 152/ 769, and was succeeded by Ḥasan the following

The change of governors did not imply any change in Arab administrative or fiscal policies. Soon Bakkār was dismissed as well and al-Ḥassan ibn Qaḥṭabah of the Ṭā'ī tribe appointed governor.

C – Direct Intervention in the Affairs of the Church

It is necessary to make a digression at this point and discuss the governorship of Sulaymān. The Arab historians do not mention any Arab governor of that name who was appointed by al-Manṣūr. According to Lewond – quoted by Asoḫik¹⁷ – an Arab band under the leadership of a general called Sulēyman (Asoḫik calls him Sliman) went marauding from the south-east (Persia) into the province of Vaspurakan. They killed two Armenian princes, Sahak and Hamazasp Arcruni, but Gagik Arcruni finally was able to kill Suleyman and expel the marauders. Yovhannēs Catholicos,¹⁸ on the other hand, speaks of an Arab official called Sulēyman who was responsible for the taxes of the province of Aḷjnik'. We saw above that Yazīd ibn Usayd had appointed tax collectors and task masters in the province of Karin to rebuild the city which was destroyed by Emperor Constantine V, in A. D. 752.¹⁹ It is possible that an Arab official called Sulaymān, as Yovhannēs Catholicos reports, was appointed over the fisc of the province of Aḷjnik' and later promoted to the office of chief inspector of taxes in Armenia.

In the Arab sources we see that there were independent officials appointed as directors of finances (*Āmil al-kharāj*) whose names were sometimes mentioned along with those of the governors. Since the governors of Armenia were often military men, appointed with the express purpose of defending the *dār al-Islām* against Khazar or Byzantine attacks, they were often busy fighting and needed to have an official responsible for the gathering of taxes. This was probably more true during the third quarter of the eighth century when the incursion of Emperor Constantine V into Armenia and northern Mesopotamia, and a number of Khazar attacks against the Caliphate took place. It is also probable, therefore, that during the governorship of Yazīd ibn Usayd, while he was busy fighting against Byzantium, the Khazars and the unruly tribesmen of the Caucasian mountains, either the central administration appointed Sulaymān

year. Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 371 puts Bakkār's coming in 153/770. We have a *dirham* from the Armīniya mint dated 152/769 and a *dirham* from the Arrān mint dated 153/770 in the name of Bakkār. We also have a *dirham* from Arrān in the name of Ḥasan dated 154/771: see R. Vasmer, *Žamanakagrut'iwn Hayastani Ostikanneru*, trans. V. Inglizean (Vienna, 1933), pp. 13 sqq.

¹⁷ Lewond, pp. 130 sq.; Asoḫik, pp. 132 sq.

¹⁸ Drasxanakertc'i, p. 106.

¹⁹ See *supra*, p. 345.

– a successful fiscal officer – as the official responsible for the fisc of all of Armenia, independent of the governor, and transferred him from Ałjnik' to Dvin; or Yazid himself might have brought Sulaymān to Dvin to be in charge of the bureau of taxation which Yovhannēs Catholicos calls “the office of this our Armenia”²⁰ without specifying what he means by it, and some modern scholars have wrongly taken to mean the governor.²¹

Sulaymān came to Dvin the year Catholicos Trdat II died, in A. D. 767. Upon hearing of the death of the Catholicos, Sulaymān imposed on the electoral college Sion the bishop of Ałjnik'. While he was still the bishop of Ałjnik' and Sulaymān the official responsible for the taxes of the same, a fountain at the foot of mount Sim suddenly dried up causing great decline in agricultural output and hence a substantial loss in state-revenue from the province. Sulaymān enlisted the help of the bishop, upon whose fervent prayers the waters gushed forth anew.²² And we read:

After this thing, then, that official (ostikan)²³ arrived to succeed to the office [of inspector] of this our Armenia; and when he arrived at the city of Dvin, forthwith Trdat II died. The *ostikan*, having heard of this, immediately dispatched men in search of bishop Sion, and having brought him he ordered the electoral college to set him on the patriarchal throne.²⁴

This was the first time that an Arab official had interfered in the election of a new Catholicos. During the century of Umayyad rule we do not come across any such interference. Nevertheless, Sion was not a weak patriarch, he stood up for the rights of the Church and his people. Even under these most inhospitable conditions he did not shrink back from his duties, and in the beginning of his patriarchate (A. D. 767/8) he convoked an ecclesiastical council at Partaw in an attempt to put an end to the abuses in the Church.

²⁰ *Infra*, p. 553.

²¹ Ormanean, vol. I, col. 604; Laurent, *Arménie*, p. 340.

²² Drasxanakerc'i, p. 106; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 88; Vardan, p. 75. According to Dionysius of Tell-Mahré, p. 146, in times of drought “L'autorité ordonna que tout peuple et toute nation sortît en procession pour faire des Rogations. Peut-être, se disait-on, le Seigneur voudra-t-il être, clément envers nous et nous ouvrir la porte de ses miséricordes. Ainsi donc, les Chrétiens sortirent ayant leurs évêques à leur tête, les juifs avec leurs trompettes, et les Arabes pareillement.” This might have happened sometime just before 1084/772-773.

²³ On the meaning of *Ostikan* see *supra*, p. 2, n. 1.

²⁴ Drasxanakerc'i, pp. 106 sq. Cf. Samuēl Anec'i, p. 93. This kind of direct interference in the affairs of the Church is also seen in Mesopotamia during the Caliphate of al-Manṣūr. Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 523 sq., reports that in 1066/755 when Patriarch Iwannis (John) died, al-Manṣūr forced upon the electoral college Isaac of Ḥarran and later Athanasius Sandalaya. Cf. Dionysius of Tell-Mahré, p. 59; see *infra*, p. 375 n. 74.

D – Council of Partaw

It is rather curious to note that the council was held in Partaw, the seat of the Albanian Catholicos, and not in Dvin. It was probably because Dvin, being the administrative centre of the province of Armīniya – including Albania and parts of Iberia – had lost some of its Armenian character and had become an Arab city. The gravity of the predicament of the Church is best reflected in the introductory paragraph and the canons of the council.

The disciples who became narrators of the divine ordinance, were sent by the Lord and received orders to preach the word of life throughout the universe; and they received the gift of success from the Holy Spirit by its descending upon them, where they were verily gathered in the upper room united in one faith, for “where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I also in their midst” said the Lord.²⁵ The same thing also the great Paul said, “Let us not forsake the gathering of ourselves together as some are in the habit of doing.”²⁶ It is befitting for us to come to this unanimous council annually, to examine and consider the institutions (rules) of the Church, which the holy fathers have laid down, how the prelates and the congregation of the Church should keep them. Wherefore, I Sion, the *episcoposapet* (Catholicos) of Armenia, not according to any merit but according to the mercy of God, being concerned for this, summoned my fellow bishops for this spiritual obligation, to dispense advice for us servants of the word who have taken upon ourselves to tend the people of the Lord, to establish the transmitted ordinance of the holy fathers, verily to supply the deficiencies with piety and to agree with respect to the same canon. And because we see everywhere the pastoral work of the overseers of the Church hindered and obstructed by the most violent administrative authorities, those who are with us bishops to whom there was an impediment from them [i.e., the rulers] to come unto us, wrote their approval by letters in order to bring to a good conclusion our well conceived design.²⁷

Besides the Catholicos only four Armenian bishops attended: George (Gēorg) bishop of Ostan, Sahak bishop of Hark', Sadovk bishop of Siwnik', Esayi bishop of Golt'an, together with Dawit' Catholicos of Albania – altogether six hierarchs including the two Catholicoi. There were also a number of Armenian and Albanian princes who took part at the council. The predicament of the Church becomes clearer if we compare the above conciliar list – of four bishops and two Catholicoi – with those of some earlier councils. The signatories of the council of Dvin in A. D. 555 were Catholicos Nersēs II, and eighteen bishops – nineteen hierarchs in all,²⁸ at the council of Dvin in A. D. 645 there

²⁵ Matthew 18:20.

²⁶ Hebrews 10:25.

²⁷ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, pp. 3 sqq.

²⁸ See BL, pp. 73 sq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 258 sq., 467 n. 19,97*

were seventeen bishops besides the Catholicos;²⁹ and at the council of Manazkert in A. D. 726 there were thirty-two Armenian ecclesiastical dignitaries including the Catholicos.³⁰

The council promulgated twenty-three canons and at the end established the canon of the Old Testament as follows: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of the Kingdoms (i.e., first and second Samuel, first and second Kings), first and second Chronicles, two books of Ezr (probably meaning Ezra and Nehemiah), Book of Job, Psalms, three books of Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon), twelve prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Of the deuterocanonical books only the Wisdom of Sirach is recommended as a help for the education of the young. It is interesting that the Book of Esther is left out and though the Wisdom of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus is recommended it is not regarded as a canonical book.³¹ Probably the canon of the Old Testament was established to combat heretics.

The critical condition of the Church is also reflected through the canons themselves. The Church suffered a great deal because of the excessive extortions of the ^cAbbāsids. The fourteenth canon condemns all who sell church property to pay the tribute.³² Canon twenty-one condemns the village elder (*geł jwag*) who on account of the royal tribute bars the door of a church and obstructs the office of divine liturgy: it is laid down that he shall be cursed both in this life and in the world to come.³³

Despite the difference in the date, place and circumstances of the present council from those of Dvin, in A. D. 645, under Catholicos Nersēs III Dayec'i, the canons of the two councils have much in common. The first canon condemns the bishop, chorepiscopus or priest who neglects his spiritual duty, while canon seventeen condemns the bishops who disregard the weak and the poor in their diocese and neglect the institutions that look after the sick.³⁴ The second canon condemns the bishop who ordains a priest from the diocese of another bishop.

Bishops should not take the liberty to ordain a priest from the diocese of another bishop; otherwise he and the ordained [man] should be deposed.³⁵

²⁹ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, pp. 214 sq.; *supra*, p. 99.

³⁰ BL, pp. 220 sqq.; Michael the Syrian, vol. II, pp. 497 sq.; Adontz, *Armenia*, pp. 262 sqq., 468 nn. 30-31, 100* sqq.

³¹ Hakobyan, *Kanonagirk'*, vol. II, pp. 17 sq.

³² *Ibid*, p. 11.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 16.

³⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 7, 12 sq.; cf. *supra*, pp. 100 sq., canons 1,4.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 7; cf. *supra*, p. 100, canons 2,3.

And canon twenty-two deals with those taken captive:

Those who are taken captive by the impious [i.e., the Muslims] and involuntarily, because of hunger or by their compulsion, should eat of unclean and impure flesh, when God should return them to their places, they should repent of their sin with a fervent heart and with tears, fasts and prayers one year outside the Church... The same canon should also be applied with regard to women who were violated involuntarily by the heathen.³⁶

On the internal front the picture of Church-State relations was the age-old one of tension between ecclesiastical and secular princes; the latter tried to appropriate the income of the Church for their own benefit. The seventh canon states that monasteries were built in villages so that the prelates of the Church, guests and the needy could sojourn therein. But unfortunately peasants lay their hands on the income of monasteries depriving them of their oil and incense by making payments to the patriarchal chief (i.e., the *naxarar*).³⁷

Besides the immediate threat of losing its income and property the Church – as well as the feudal establishment faced the danger of mixed marriages. Though hitherto it was not widespread yet it contained the seeds of a potentially dangerous situation. A Muslim could marry a Christian woman and inherit her lands, if she belonged to the noble class, but a Christian could not marry a Muslim woman without himself first becoming a Muslim.³⁸ The eleventh canon condemns mixed marriage in the strongest terms:

Priests should give direction to men and women and to their daughters that they should not join in wedlock with heathens, for it is not matrimony but illicit and abominable copulation, “for what share is there to the believing with the unbelieving...”³⁹ for it is more wicked than fornication and more abominable than adultery, a physical [i.e., a sexual] transgression.⁴⁰

³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 16 sq.; cf. *supra*, p. 102, canon 7.

³⁷ Hakobyan, *op.cit.* pp. 8 sq. Grigor Tat'ewac'i, p. 545 says that the fifth council was held in Partaw under Lord Sion Catholicos of Armenia against the sectarians, the laxity of the clergy of the Church and “the usurpation of princes”. By princes he means the indigenous *naxarars* for no Armenian source calls Arab officials *išxan* (prince). Cf. *supra*, pp. 103 sq.

³⁸ C. Cahen, “Dhimma”, *IEP*, vol. II, p. 228.

³⁷ Hakobyan, *op.cit.* pp. 8 sq. Grigor Tat'ewac'i, p. 545 says that the fifth council was held in Partaw under Lord Sion Catholicos of Armenia against the sectarians, the laxity of the clergy of the Church and “the usurpation of princes”. By princes he means the indigenous *naxarars* for no Armenian source calls Arab officials *išxan* (prince). Cf. *supra*, pp. 103 sq.

³⁸ C. Cahen, “Dhimma”, *IEP*, vol. II, p. 228.

³⁹ II Corinthians 6:15b.

⁴⁰ Hakobyan, *op. cit.* p. 10.

Despite these strong words the Church was aware of her limitations; both the spiritual and temporal lords gathered at Partaw knew that they were powerless to stop these mixed marriages, therefore the canon claims only moral authority.

The nineteenth canon deals with the question of plebeians found in error (heresy?):

Any member of the laity who, on account of diverse faults, is excommunicated by the bishop, if he dies let a priest neither bury him nor baptize his child; then if the child of such a man should reach (the point) of dying, let the priest baptize the child and bury the dead (babe), but he should guard carefully the other bonds (censures) of the excommunication (lit. word).⁴¹

Comparing the above canon with the thirty-second canon of the council of Dvin, in A. D. 719, under Catholicos Yovhannēs Ojneg'i, we see that there is a softening in the attitude of the Church against heretics.⁴² Instead of branding with the fox-sign or inflicting physical punishment the canon only speaks of withholding the services of the Church such as burying, baptizing, and the Holy Communion. This is probably an indication of the weakening of the position of the Church under the early ʿAbbāsids.

E – *Rebellion in Armenia*

Ḥaṣan ibn Qaḥṭabah came to Armenia (A. D. 771) with a large contingent of Khurāsānī mercenary soldiers who went about plundering and looting the country side. Al-Ḥaṣan employed even harsher methods to extort money; beside hanging, flogging and torture, a favourite novelty of his was to throw people naked into a freezing lake, in the cold of the Armenian winter, to exact more tribute. According to Lewond, it was a customary thing to see “the humiliation of patriarchs (հայրապետաց), contempt of bishops, lashing and torture of priests, dragging of princes and ruin of *naxarars*.”⁴³ Though the ʿAbbāsids worked under the banner of religion, yet in their administrative practices they often disregarded the Islamic laws and traditions. One of the guiding principles of Islamic fiscal policy was taxing people with leniency and not burdening them above their capacity.⁴⁴

There were further repressive measures in Armenia, including massacres – such as those in K'alın, Aren and the town of T'alın – when seven hundred men

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 15.

⁴² *Supra*, pp. 290 sq.

⁴³ Lewond, p. 137.

⁴⁴ See *supra*, pp. 114-116.

were killed and 1200 made captives.⁴⁵ The situation in Armenia disintegrated to such a degree that, unable to bear the cruelties and excessive extortions of the Khurāsānī mercenaries, some of the *naxarars* – led by the Byzantinophile Mamikonid dynasty – took up arms against the Caliphate in A. D. 774. Caliph al-Manṣūr sent Amr (ʿAmīr ibn Ismāʿīl) with 30,000 more Khurāsānī troops to extinguish the rebellion which spread like a bush fire all over Armenia. In two decisive battles Amīr defeated the Armenian forces: at Arčēš on Saturday, 4 Hrotic’ (15 April 775), and at Bagrewand, near the village of Arjn, on Monday, 13 Hrotic’ (24 April 775).⁴⁶ The Armenian sources say nothing about the attitude of the Church to the rebellion. Once again if we are to take the attitude of Lewond – a member of the clergy and an eye-witness of these events – towards the rebellion as representing the official view of the Church, we can say that the Church – like the main body of the princes of the Bagratuni dynasty – was totally opposed to the rebellion.⁴⁷ Most probably Catholicos Sion I, in cooperation with prince Ašot Bagratuni, – the son and successor of Sahak to the office of ‘prince of Armenia’ – tried to admonish the rebels against such a senseless venture. The ʿAbbāsids were as yet too strong to be dislodged from Armenia. But again the rebels were in no mood to listen to any expostulation. The tragedies of Arčēš and Bagrewand were instrumental in hastening the death of Catholicos Sion I, in A. D. 775.

With the suppression of the rebellion most of Armenia was left defenceless against ʿAbbāsīd repression. The Bagratunis left Bagrewand and southwest Armenia and took refuge in the mountainous region bordering the Byzantine Empire or in Iberia. The Mamikonean dynasty, along with the

⁴⁵ Drasxanakertc’i, p. 107; Asolik, p. 105; Samuēl Anec’i, p. 89; Kirakos, p. 72.

⁴⁶ For a detailed description of the uprising see Lewond, pp. 137-152; Vardan, p. 75; Kirakos, p. 72; Ć’amč’ean, vol. II, pp. 413 sqq. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 210, trans. Hitti, p. 329 reports, “After the dismissal of ibn-Usaid and Bakkār ibn-Muslim al-ʿUkaili, and during the governorship of al-Ḥasan ibn-kaḥṭabah aṭ-ṭā’i, the Armenians broke off their allegiance under their chief Mūshā’il al-Aramani. Al-Manṣūr sent reinforcements under ʿĀmir ibn Ismāʿīl. Al-Ḥasan engaged himself in fight with Mūshā’il and killed him, dispersing his troops.” Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 451, following H. Daghaschean, *Gründung des Bagratidenreiches durch Aschot Bagratuni* (Berlin, 1893), p. 58 sqq. says the battle of Bagrewand was in A. D. 772. Laurent, *Arménie*, pp. 94 sq. and Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 327 sqq. also follow Daghaschean and Marquart in putting the battle at A. D. 772. Ališan, *Ayrarat*, p. 525 was the first to give the date as 25 April 775. Ghazarian, *Armenien*, p. 49 quotes Ališan, while Manandyan, *History*, vol. II, pt. ii, pp. 219-222 says it was 24 April 775. Manandyan’s dating is correct.

⁴⁷ Lewond, pp. 141 sq. regards the revolt a “senseless fantasy”, and the hermit who encouraged the uprising, saying the end of the Arab domination was at hand, as “fraudulent and vicious”.

Kamsarakans and the Gnuni houses, disappeared. The remnants of the Mamikonians took refuge in Byzantine territory and the daughter of Mušel Mamikonian married an Arab *amīr* called Jahap (*Jahhāf*) of the Banū Qays tribe.⁴⁸ The lands of the *naxarars* who had perished and of those who had fled to Byzantine territory passed into the hands of the Arab *amīrs* who settled Arab tribesmen in their place. These Arab colonies, in the beginning of the ninth century, formed two Arab Amirates around Lake Van – Qaysid and Shaybanid Amirates.⁴⁹ Following the suppression of the rebellion the ^ĊAbbāsids established direct rule over Armenia for three decades, till A. D. 806. In the same year (A. D. 775) also died the Byzantine Emperor Constantine V Copronymus (14 September 775) and Caliph Abū Ja^Ċfar al-Mansūr (Dhū al-Ḥijjaj 158/October 775).

II – Direct Arab Rule and the Church

During the years of direct Arab rule (159/775-190/806) we do not come across the name of any *naxarar* who occupied the office of prince of Armenia.⁵⁰ These years could be characterized as years of repression, extortion, mass exodus and of deterioration in the relations between the Church and the Arab administration. A number of incidents that occurred during the last quarter of the eighth century were symptomatic of this change and indicate a departure from the old religious practices of the Umayyads.

Before discussing in detail these incidents we ought to touch briefly upon the ^ĊAbbāsīd administrative and fiscal policies in contrast to those of the Umayyad Caliphate. We have already seen that Abū al-^ĊAbbās stopped the payment of annual stipends to the Armenian cavalry; he also revived the policy of gathering both the poll tax and land tax that Hishām had discontinued in

⁴⁸ Vardan, p. 76, Č'amč'ean, vol. II, pp. 414 sq. Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 403 sq.; Laurent, *Arménie*, p. 322, n.1; Grousset, *Histoire*, p. 331, nn. 4,5.

⁴⁹ On the Qaysid Amirate of Manazkert and the Shaybanid Amirate of Arzen see Laurent, *Arménie*, pp. 322-331; Daghabaschean, *Gründung*, pp. 62 sqq. More recently the work of A. Ter Lewondyan, *Arabakan Amirayut'yunner Bagratunyac' Hayastanum* (Erevan, 1963), pp. 57-78.

⁵⁰ Drasxanakerc'i, p. 111, records that since the Hagarites had become complete masters of Armenia, the grandees of the land decreased both in number and influence; those who survived were totally subject to the Arab rule as a result of which there was no further word to say about them. Samuēl Anec'i, p. 91, says that Ašot Bagratuni surnamed Msaker (carnivorous) became prince of Armenia in A. D. 804. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 210 on the other hand reports that al-Ḥasan ibn Qaḥṭabah was succeeded by ^ĊUthmān ibn ^ĊUmārah ibn Khuraym, who was governor of Armenia till A. D. 785. There is a *dirham* from Armīniya mint in the name of Ibn Khuraym dated 166/782-783 and another from Arrān dated 168/784-785, see E. A. Pakhomov, *Money of Ādhārbayjān* (in Russian) (Baku, 1959), p. 81.

A. D. 732; moreover, he greatly increased the amount of tribute to be paid by Armenia and collected the imposts mainly in money so that the lack of ready cash threatened to ruin the economy of the land.⁵¹ These oppressive policies continued all through Abū Jaʿfar’s Caliphate, but his son and successor Abū ʿAbdallah Muḥammad al-Mahdī (Dhū al-Ḥijjaj 158/Oct.775-Muḥarram 169/Aug. 785) temporarily reversed the monetary policy of his father and put more money in circulation; according to Lewond because of his liberality he opened the stores of treasures that the impious Abū Jaʿfar had stored and kept under key and lock and distributed stipends to his soldiers. He also opened the frontiers with the Byzantine Empire and encouraged commerce, though at the same time he increased the taxes.⁵² His successor, al-Hādī (Caliph for fourteen months: Muḥarram 169/Aug. 785-Rabīʿ I. 170/Sept. E86), was much more intolerant. He appointed Khuzaymah ibn Khāzim al-Tamīmī governor over Armenia⁵³ and “it was he (Khuzaymah) who introduced the system by which Dabīl and an-Nashawa (Naxčawan) paid land tax according to the area, not the produce.”⁵⁴ Balādhurī further adds that khuzaymah was the severest of the governors and Lewond makes a passing reference corroborating Balādhurī’s statement, saying that he was “seditious and had an infernal appearance”,⁵⁵ for he employed very cruel means to extort the additional tribute from the people.

Undoubtedly the increase of taxes and the intolerable way in which it was extorted generated strong resentment among the Armenians. Yaʿqūbī’s statement that Khuzaymah was sent to suppress a rebellion in Armenia is somewhat confused, for no other source speaks of an uprising at that time.⁵⁶ What saved Armenia from total economic ruin was the discovery of new silver mines that made the meeting of the additional taxes possible.⁵⁷ This economic potential gave them a certain degree of political and military power which made the

⁵¹ *Supra*, pp. 542 sq., 346 n. 11.

⁵² Lewond, pp. 154 sq.

⁵³ Yaʿqūbī, vol. II, p. 515 says, “After the death of al-Mahdī Armenia revolted and did not cease rebelling in the days of Mūsā when al-Rashīd appointed Khuzaymah ibn Khāzim al-Tamīmī over Armenia who stayed there a year and two months and suppressed the rebellion”. Lewond, p. 162, says very distinctly that Mūsā al-Hādī appointed Xasm. Asolīk, p. 133 corroborates Lewond’s statement by putting the martyrdoms of Hamazasp and Sahak Arcruni at the time of Caliph Mūsā in AE 234/786. Judging from the length of time Khuzaymah was in Armenia – 14 months – which exactly corresponds with the duration of al-Hādī’s rule, and in the light of Asolīk’s statement we could accept Lewond’s assertion.

⁵⁴ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 210, trans. Hitti, p. 330.

⁵⁵ Lewond, p. 162.

⁵⁶ *Supra*, p. 365 n. 53.

⁵⁷ Lewond, p. 155.

situation more dangerous. The ^ĊAbbāsids wanted to subjugate Armenia totally to their rule by destroying not only the economic basis of its autonomy but also its feudal organization and military power; hence the dispatching of Khuzaymah ibn Khāzim to Armenia with a big army, ten years after the suppression of the bloody revolution of A. D. 775. Balādhurī, speaking about the coming of Khuzaymah to Armenia, says:

The Armenian patricians did not cease to hold their lands as usual, each trying to protect his own region; and whenever a ^Ċāmil came to the frontier they would coax him; and if they found in him purity and severity, as well as force and equipment, they would give the Kharāj and render submission, otherwise they would deem him weak and look down upon him.⁵⁸

This picture is further corroborated by Lewond:

When he (Khuzaymah) arrived at the city of Dvin, all the Armenian *naxarars* came to meet him; the princes of the Arcruni house Hamazasp, Sahak and Mehrušan came also to meet him. But the malicious adversary, seeing... the re-formation of the corps of noble troops that were with them [i.e., the Arcrunis], immediately seized and imprisoned them.⁵⁹

This policy of total subjugation took economic, political, military and religious forms.

A – *The Martyrdom of Hamazasp and Sahak Arcruni*

Despite the blood bath of A. D. 775 and the ensuing establishment of direct Arab rule, and despite the socio-geographic changes that resulted from it, two noble dynasties emerged to dominate the subsequent political arena of Armenia: the Bagratunis, who had taken refuge in Sper – adjoining the Byzantine Empire – and the Arcrunis who had established themselves firmly in Vaspurakan. Both were able to hold their own ground against all the endeavours of the ^ĊAbbāsids to subjugate them. In his attempt to undermine the political dominance of these two princely houses, Caliph al-Mahdī appointed Tačat, the son of prince Gregory Anjewac'i, as prince of Armenia⁶⁰ – following the old policy of divide and rule. His plans, however, came to nothing when Tačat died

⁵⁸ Balādhurī, *loc. cit.*, trans. Hitti, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁹ Lewond p. 162.

⁶⁰ On Tačat Anjewac'i see Lewond, pp. 158-161; Tačat had taken refuge in the Byzantine Empire after the ^ĊAbbāsid revolution and had served the Empire in her fights against the Bulgars and Arabs; Theophanes, *Chronographia* p. 451. Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 501 calls him Ṭāzādh (طازاد)

fighting the Khazars in 168/ 785.⁶¹ When this ploy failed, the central government had no choice but to resort to military means; hence it was in pursuance of the same policy of subjugation that Caliph al-Hādī sent Khuzaymah to Armenia with a big army.

The Arcrunis had already caused some trouble to the ^cAbbāsids while they were still consolidating their hold over Vaspurakan,⁶² and when Khuzaymah saw “the re-formation of the corps of noble troops” of the Arcruni brothers, he could not remain indifferent, but “immediately seized them and imprisoned them”. The three princes were kept in goal for three months accused of conspiracy. According to Lewond, Khuzaymah wrote to the Caliph asking his advice, and received orders to put them to death. However, the governor gave them the choice of abjuring their faith and accepting Islam or the sword. They were subjected to intolerable tortures to induce them to embrace Islam; Hamazasp and Sahak remained firm in their conviction and were martyred but Mehružan, the youngest, saved his neck by conversion.⁶³ Most probably Khuzaymah singled out the Arcruni princes for such treatment so as to make them an example to the rest; if the Arcrunis could not escape his wrath who could then withstand the displeasure of the governor?

Undoubtedly political, economic and military considerations played an important role in the death of Hamazasp and Sahak and it should therefore be regarded more as a political incident than a religious act. These martyrdoms, however, should be seen in the double light of the religious character of the ^cAbbāsīd Caliphate and the religious practices of the Umayyads. Comparing the martyrdom of the Arcrunis with those of Dawit’ Dvneč’i⁶⁴ and Vahan

the Armenian patrician, while Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VI, p. 42 calls him Tārādh (ط ر ا د). Both must refer to Tāzād (ط ز ا د) or the Armenian form Tačat. He later passed to the Arab side around A. D. 780/1. See also Justi, *Namenbuch*, p. 320; Laurent, *Arménie*, pp. 97 sq. 195, Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 334 sqq.

⁶¹ At this battle also died a number of other princes among whom are mentioned Bagarat Bagratuni the chief constable and Nersēh Kamsarakan, Lewond, p. 161.

⁶² Lewond, pp. 130 sq., Asolik, pp. 132 sq.

⁶³ Lewond, p. 165, puts the martyrdom on Christmas day AE 233/784; Asolik, p. 133 puts it in AE 234/785 during the Caliphate of al-Hādī (Aug. 785-Sept. 786). Menologium Ms. Marsh 438, vol. III, fol. 408 puts it in AE 232/783 and says it was during the Caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd. The dating of the menologium is somewhat confused, since Rashīd became Caliph after Sept. 786. The difference of a year between Lewond and Asolik is most probably a scribal error ւլգ and ւլդ. 1 Nawasard 234, falls on 14 May 785; Christmas day of the same year was 28 Areg 234 (6 January 786 which is indeed during the Caliphate of al-Hādī. See also Awgerean, *Vark’*, vol. VI, pp. 330-345; V kayabanut’iwn Srboč’ Iṣṣanac’n Hamazaspay ew Sahakay, SH, vol. xii, pp. 61-80.

⁶⁴ *Supra*, pp. 211-215.

Goł't'nac'i,⁶⁵ a significant divergence is discernible: the death of Dawit' and Vahan were religious acts with a religious motivation, that of the Arcruni brothers was a religious act with a political motive. The first two were put to death because they had apostatized and according to Islamic law apostates are to be killed but the Arcruni brothers were executed because they were to be made an example to the rest of the Armenian princes. This was the first time that Christians were forced to abjure their religion in Armenia. Moreover, if we keep in mind the fact that the ^ĊAbbāsids were regarded as the embodiment of the true conception of the Caliphate – viz., a theocracy with Islam as its hall-mark – then even political or quasi-political acts carry a certain degree of religious significance. We could conclude therefore that the martyrdom of Hamazasp and Sahak Arcruni represents a clear departure from earlier Umayyad religious practices, though it is debatable if one can call it a change of religious policy.

B – *Ibndokē and his Excesses*

Mūsā al-Hādī was succeeded by his brother Hārūn al-Rashīd (Rabī^Ċ I. 170/Sept. 786–Jumāda II 193/March 809). He dismissed Khuzaymah and appointed in his place Yūsuf ibn Rāshid al-Sulamī governor of Armenia, in A. D. 787; but soon dismissed him and appointed his brother ^ĊUbaydallah ibn Mahdī as viceroy of Caucasia with authority to appoint governors, in 172/788.⁶⁶ The latter appointed Yazīd ibn Mazyad al-Shaybānī, then ^ĊAbd al-Kabīr ibn ^ĊAbd al-Ḥamīd, and finally Sulaymān. It is interesting to note that Ya^Ċqūbī does not even mention the viceroyalty of ^ĊUbaydallah and says that al-Rashīd appointed ^ĊAbd al-Kabīr, and has nothing about Sulaymān, while the last two are both missing in Balādhurī and Ṭabarī. This could have been due to the fact that they were both appointed by ^ĊUbaydallah and not by the Caliph directly. Yazīd ibn Mazyad was appointed by Rashīd a second time. However, we must attach more importance to the account of Lewond because he was a contemporary and ends his history with the events that took place during the governorship of Sulaymān.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Supra*, pp. 325–332.

⁶⁶ Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 210, gives the following names as governors of Armenia: Khuzaymah ibn Khāzim, Yazīd ibn Mazyad al-Shaybānī, ^ĊUbaydallah ibn al-Mahdī and Faql ibn Yaḥya. Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 607 says, Rashīd dismissed Yazīd ibn Mazyad and appointed ^ĊUbaydallah ibn al-Mahdī in 172/788–789. Ya^Ċqūbī, vol. II, pp. 515 sq. says Rashīd appointed Yūsuf ibn Rāshid al-Sulamī, Yazīd ibn Mazyad, ^ĊAbd al-Kabīr ibn ^ĊAbd al-Ḥamīd and Faql ibn Yaḥya. Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VI, p. 81 repeats Ṭabarī.

⁶⁷ Lewond, p. 166, says that it was ^ĊUbaydallah who appointed the three governors. Vasmer, *Governors*, p. 33 thinks that the Arabic letter ^Ċ appearing on the coins of ^ĊUbay-

Lewond describes Sulaymān as being more evil and a greater malefactor than all the rest, who cast the unbearable burden of taxation upon the neck of all Armenians, so that the people were like sheep among ravening wolves. Sulaymān had a son-in-law, a Greek renegade called Ibndokē, whom he charged with the collection of the tribute of the land. Ibndokē's greed knew no bounds. When he arrived in Dvin,

He tortured with excessive cruelty the inhabitants of this our land by the collection of taxes. All the *naxarars* and the common people (*ramikk'*), along with the clergy and the Catholicos, whose name was Esayi (Isaiah), gathered before him and appealed to him to lighten the iron collar of the burden of taxation that he exacted, but it profited them nothing.⁶⁸

From the above quoted passage we can see that there was no prince of Armenia to join the Catholicos in protesting against the excesses of Ibndokē. Esayi had to face alone the wrath of the fiscal officer who probably never forgave the Church for his boldness. Ibndokē's reaction was immediate and much more drastic: he doubled the annual tribute and ordered his agents to affix a leaden seal upon the necks of all who paid.

The poverty of the people and the excessive extortions of the Arab officials forced the Armenians into mass exodus. Under the leadership of prince Šapuh Amatuni and his son Hamam 12,000 Armenians crossed into Byzantine territory.⁶⁹ In place of the fleeing Armenians the central administration settled Arab tribesmen.⁷⁰ The introduction of new Arab colonizers strained even more the already deteriorating relations between the Church and Arab administration. The condition of those remaining behind was so pitiable that Lewond compares it with that of the Gibeonites of old:

And the rest of the people who remained behind, because of their extreme poverty, surrendered themselves to the bondage of a slave, (working as) wood-cutters and water-carriers, in the likeness of the Gibeonites.⁷¹

But even more calamitous for the Church was the thing Ibndokē had in store for her: when Catholicos Esayi I Eḫipatrušec'i (775-788) died, Ibndokē found it opportune to lay his hands on the wealth of the Church. He forced the clergy

dallah, when he was viceroy of Caucasia, probably stood for Sulaymān. See also Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 454 sq.

⁶⁸ Lewond, p. 167. Cf. Asolik, p. 134.

⁶⁹ Lewond, p. 168; Asolik, p. 134.

⁷⁰ Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 515 sq. reports that Yūsuf ibn Rāshid al-Sulamī transported a group of al-Nazāriyah (north Arabian tribe). Then Yazīd ibn Mazyad al-Shaybānī transported the Rabī^cah tribe, finally, ^cAbd al-Kabīr ibn ^cAbd al-Ḥamīd settled a group of the inhabitants of Diyār Muḍar.

⁷¹ Lewond, p. 169; cf. Asolik, p. 134. On the Gibeonites see Joshua, chs. 9-10.

into making a complete inventory of all the wealth of the Church, threatening them with death if they should hide anything from him:

But being terror-crazed by the threats of extreme punishment, they delivered everything unto his hands, and all that they found in the secret treasures they made known unto him... the desirable vessels of gold and silver and those of precious stones, and the royal garments that were presented in honour of the holy and glorious and God-receiving altar of the Lord. When he saw all the treasures, he thought of taking them all at once as booty; and again having changed his mind he took that which appeared to him personally desirable of the treasures and the excellent robes and some others of the vessels; and whatever was left in the deposits (coffers) of the Church, he gave to the keepers of deposits of the same, until the succession of Step'anos to the patriarchal throne.⁷²

Again, the way in which Ibndokē treated the Church was symptomatic of the deteriorating relations between the Church and the Arab administration. Probably what Ibndokē did was more of a personal act than a matter of policy; it is generally accepted that converts are more fanatical about their religious convictions than ordinary people. It is important to point out, however, that he could not take all the treasures but only those “which appeared to him personally desirable of the treasures... robes and... vessels.” It was most probably because he could find no justification for such an act that he “changed his mind” and left the rest in the care of “the keepers of deposits”. It is more significant to note that all through the Umayyad Caliphate the Church was able to guard most of her treasures of gold and silver, including “royal garments”, presumably given by the Arsacid kings of Armenia, before A. D. 427/8, and only lost them during the^cAbbāsid rule.

Finally, Ibndokē was not satisfied with plundering the Church of some of her treasures but he also interfered in the election of the new Catholicos. Lewond dedicates the last lines of his history to the description of the election of Catholicos Steptanos I Dvneç'i (788-790), saying:

... who by the payment of much fees,⁷³ succeeded to the patriarchal throne; he dissipated all of his wealth and possessions, until there was deliverance of the villages, servants and tributes of the patriarchate.⁷⁴

⁷² Lewond, pp. 169 sq.; cf. Asolik, p. 135; Kirakos, p. 75.

⁷³ The word used is *Kaşar* (կաշար) which in common usage means bribe, but according to NSHL, vol. I, p. 1052 it has two other meanings: 1. δῶρον, δόμα, *Donum, munus* – a gift, present or payment; 2. λύτρον, *redemptionis pretium* – price of release, ransom money, a sum paid for the redemption of a pledge. If he had ascended the patriarchal throne by force of bribery, he would not have spent all his wealth on ransoming the patriarchal villages and servants. See also Ormanean, vol. I, col. 622.

⁷⁴ Lewond, p. 170. Asolik, p. 135; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 89; Kirakos, p. 75. Drasxanakertc'i, p. 108 and Vardan, p. 75 mention his succession without giving any information about the circumstances.

The question of paying fees to be confirmed as patriarch was unprecedented in Armenia. The Umayyads neither meddled in the internal affairs of the Church nor interfered in the election of the Catholicoi so long as they were politically acceptable. The ^cAbbāsids set a precedent that later became the standard practice. Michael the Syrian reports that in 1066/755-756, under the instigation of Caliph al-Manṣūr, bishop Isaac of Ḥarran was raised to the patriarchal throne and continues:

Ils s'assemblèrent à Réš^cayna, et l'établirent illégitimement. Il obtint du roi un diplôme pour obliger tout le monde à le recevoir...⁷⁵

Later in 1076/766 when patriarch Georgius failed to obtain a certificate after his election, Caliph al-Manṣūr put him in prison.⁷⁶ The certificate, most probably, was not given for nothing, but they had to pay a certain sum of money to receive it. Thus again the payment of fees was a novelty introduced by the ^cAbbāsids in their religious policy. It is also important to underline the fact that taxes were reimposed on the clergy and church property, for the Catholicos had to redeem the villages, servants and tribute of the patriarchate by paying money.

C – The Second Governorship of Khuzaymah

During the Caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd the situation in Armenia disintegrated greatly; there was widespread discontent because of the excessive extortions of the Arab officials. Though he is the most celebrated of the Caliphs, Lewond finds nothing praiseworthy in him; he calls Hārūn “avaricious and too fond of money”.⁷⁷ During the Caliphate of al-Rashīd, Ya^cqūbī mentions the names of fifteen governors appointed over Armenia while Ghazarian lists nineteen,⁷⁸ all of which indicate the unstable situation in the land. At the beginning of the patriarchate of Yovsep' II of Zuart'noc' (795-806),⁷⁹ the Caliph appointed Khuzaymah ibn Khāzim governor of Armenia a second time. Accor-

⁷⁵ Michael the Syrian, trans. Chabot, vol. II, p. 524.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 527.

⁷⁷ Lewond, p. 166.

⁷⁸ Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, pp. 515-519; Ghazarian, *Armenien*, pp. 40 sq.

⁷⁹ Drassanakertc'i, p. 111, calls him “of the inhabitants of Saint Gregory” and Asohik, p. 106, says “of the village of Saint Gregory”. Šahxat'uncan, *Storagrut'iwn*, vol. II, pp. 75 sq. identifies it with the village of P'arpi in Aragacotn, which Ormanean, vol. I, col. 629 also accepts. We know that Catholicos Nersēs III built the cathedral of Zuart'noc' and a village around it. One of the names given to the Church and the surrounding village was Saint Gregory (*supra*, p. 133 n. 161). Thus he should be called of St. Gregory, or of Zuart'noc' rather than of P'arpi.

ding to Yovhannēs Catholicos, “having come to the city of Dvin, he reduced to slavery those who were subject to him”. It was not enough to be “wood-cutters” and “water-carriers”, they were now to be completely dependent on the goodwill of the government. We saw above that during his first term of office under al-Hādī, he put to death the two Arcruni brothers. Now, when he was appointed a second time,

Having seen the amenity of the very great estates of the patriarchal seat Artasat, Kawakert and Horomoc’Marg, along with their farms, and being deceived by his evil desires and demon-driven greed... he demanded of patriarch Yovsēp’ to grant him the great estates under pretence of purchasing them with money. But the great man risked his life and absolutely did not yield to his evil and wicked dictates. And the *ostikan*, because of the rage of his heart, imprisoned the man of God and bound him with fetters and beat him with a stick, to the end that perhaps being terrified he might concede him his request.⁸⁰

When all of these did not produce the desired results the governor resorted to deceitful means; he filled three bags with treasures and publicly sent them to the patriarchate, on the heads of his servants, and ordered them to slip away from the other side taking the treasures with them. Then Khuzaymah “spread the news that the estates were sold to him and having released the man of God from detention sent him home to his house.”⁸¹

The Catholicos did not keep silence in the face of such great injustice. Despite all the threats of the governor⁸² he appealed to the *atean ulloc’* (court of rectification) and finally succeeded in freeing two of the estates – Kawakert and Horomoc’ Marg – from the hands of the unjust *ostikan*. The office, mentioned above, to which the Catholicos appealed was most probably the famous *dīwān alnazar fī al-mazālim*, the bureau of examination into wrongful exactions⁸³ or the department for the inspection of grievances. It was a kind of court of appeals with, among many other functions, two of special importance. Firstly, it dealt with religious endowments and inalienable property (*waqf*, pl. *awqāf*).⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Drasxanakertc’i, p. 111 sq.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 112.

⁸² Khuzaymah had the brother of the Catholicos killed as a warning, Drasxanakertc’i, p. 113.

⁸³ For the etymology see E. Tyan, *Histoire de l’organisation judiciaire en pays d’Islam*, 2^{ème} ed. (Leiden, 1960), p. 436.

⁸⁴ Tyan, *ibid*, p. 461 says, “Le contrôle des biens de mainmorte (waḳf) publics (الوقوف العامة), c’est-à-dire les waḳf dont les revenus ne sont pas destinés à des particuliers mais sont affectés à des buts d’intérêt général, comme les fondations qui doivent servir à l’entretien des lieux du culte, des mosquées, des établissements d’enseignement, les madrasas etc... Le titulaire des mazālim vérifiera la gestion de ces biens, en veillant à ce qu’elle soit assurée conformément à leur destination et à la volonté de l’auteur de la fondation.”

The three ecclesiastical estates were of course religious endowments and were, therefore, unalienable. Secondly, the *mazālim* dealt with the abuses of authority by public officials in such matters as the miscarriage of justice and illegal expropriation of property.⁸⁵ Abū Yūsuf, in his recommendations on good government to Hārūn al-Rashīd, speaks of the necessity of having a *diwān al-mazālim*. He suggests that the Caliph hold court once a month or once every two but not less than once a year. Al-Rashīd hearkened to the advice of Abū Yūsuf.⁸⁶

Once more the forcible expropriation of ecclesiastical estates was unprecedented in Armenia. It is, however, again open to question if it represented a change in the basic religious principles of the Caliphate. It was probably more of a personal attempt on the part of Khuzaymah to appropriate some of the ecclesiastical estates for his own benefit. We know that one of Hārūn al-Rashīd's governors over Egypt, ʿAlī ibn Sulaymān ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdallāh ibn al-ʿAbbās,⁸⁷ ordered the closing of all the public houses where wine was drunk and the demolition of all the churches built after the Arab conquest. Hārūn al-Rashīd himself in 191/807 ordered the *dhimmis* to wear discriminating clothes and had all the churches in the frontier region destroyed.⁸⁸ There was thus a polarity in the religious policy of the Caliphate during Hārūn's reign. Though the court realized that the governor was wrong yet it ordered the return of only two of the estates while Artasat was lost for the Church.

D – Church-State Relations until the Rise of the Bagratids

Armenia was being systematically ruined by the ʿAbbāsīd administration through extortions, expropriation and exile. The Church as well as the *naxarars* lost their wealth and influence. Fortunately, however, this process of destruc-

⁸⁵ Tyan, *ibid*, p. 464, "D'autre part, rentrent dans cette classe tous les cas d'usurpation de biens ou violation de droits commis par des officiers publics – ce qu'on appelle *ḡuṣūb sulṭānyya*, (غصوب ساطانية) – ou par de puissants personnages, au préjudice des particuliers."

⁸⁶ For a comprehensive discussion of the *dīwān al-naẓar fī al-mazālim* see Tyan *ibid*, pp. 433-525; Mawardī, pp. 128-164 (esp. p. 131); Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-Maḥāsīn wa al-Masāwī*, ed. Fr. Schwally (Giessen, 1902), pp. 527-537. The first to establish such a *Dīwān* was the Umayyad Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, which Tyan p. 476 finds questionable and suggests that the first to exercise personally this form of justice was the third ʿAbbāsīd Caliph, al-Mahdī. On Hārūn al-Rashīd see Abū Yūsuf, *Kharāj*, 2nd ed. p. 133, Tyan, *ibid*, pp. 476, 506.

⁸⁷ Kindī, *Kitāb al-wulāh wa Kitāb al-quḍāh*, ed. R. Guest (London, 17 Shawwal 169/April 786-Rabiʿ I. 171/Aug. 787, Zambaur, *Genealogie*, vol. I, p. 26.

⁸⁸ Ṭabarī, vol. III, pp. 712 sq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VI, p. 141.

tion was halted at the beginning of the ninth century. What saved the Church and the nation from utter desolation was the disintegrating situation within the Caliphate. The Khurramiya movement shook the Caliphate from its foundation. The most important figure of the movement, Bābek al-Khurrami, kept the Caliphal armies occupied for over two decades, 201/817-223/837.⁸⁹ The Bagratunis who had taken refuge in Sper – the mountainous region bordering the Byzantine Empire – were cultivating friendly relations with Byzantium and thus posed a serious threat to the government in Baghdad. To win back the Bagratunis and to check the spread of Byzantine influence among the *naxarars* of the north-western cantons of Armenia, on the one hand, and to check the rebellious Arab *amīrs* around Armenia with their ambitious schemes and to fight effectively against Bābek, on the other, Hārūn al-Rashīd appointed Ašot Bagratuni, with the sobriquet Msaker (carnivorous), as prince of Armenia in 190/806.⁹⁰

During the first half of the ninth century the Caliphate was shaken with internal convulsions. While Bābek's rebellion was in full swing the two sons of Hārūn al-Rashīd were busy fighting one another for the succession. The wars of succession lasted till A. D. 819, when Ma'mūn finally made his entry into the capital. But even then his authority was not unchallenged in Syria until A. D. 825 and in the north-east until the final defeat of Bābek in 836/7. *Amīr* Isma'īl of Taflis (809), *amīrs* Jahhāf, 'Abd al-Malik and Sawada of Manazkert (813-830), and *amīr* Naṣr of Edessa and Mar'ash (812-825) had also rebelled against the authority of the central government.⁹¹ In the meantime both in the east and west a number of petty dynasties had arisen.⁹² In its struggle against Bābek and the rebellious *amīrs* around Armenia the central government made extensive use of the Armenian princes and their military potential. In fact, it was an Armenian prince, Sahl the son of Smbat, who captured Bābek and delivered him to Afshin.⁹³ Consequently, the Armenian *naxarars* were able to consolidate their position and following the example of Arab *amīrs* around them wanted to be autonomous, if not independent. Thus for four decades (806-847) the

⁸⁹ Ṭabarī, vol. III, pp. 1072, 1102, 1171-79, 1219-28; Ya'qūbī, vol. II, pp. 563 sqq., 577 sqq.; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VI, pp. 290 sqq., 321-339. Orbelean, pp. 115 sq.; Kałankatuac'i, pp. 263 sq.; Vardan, p. 79; Laurent, *Arménie*, pp. 317-320.

⁹⁰ Vardan, p. 79. He is one of the princes who survived the battle of Bagrewand (A. D. 775).

⁹¹ Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 457-460; Manandyan, *History*, vol. II, pt. ii, pp. 32 sq.

⁹² Ṭāhirids in Marw (205/820, Aghlabids in North Africa (185/801) and the Dulafids in al-Jibāl east of Nihawend (210/825).

⁹³ On the capture of Bābek see Ṭabarī, vol. III, pp. 1219, 1222-1227; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VI, pp. 335 sq.; Ya'qūbī, vol. II, p. 579. *Dasxuranc'i*, trans. Dowsett, p. 217; Vardan, p. 79.

naxarars enjoyed a great degree of autonomy which also meant that the Church itself was free from government interference and extortions.

Church-State relations on the internal front was not as smooth at this time as one would have expected. Bagarat Bagratuni who had succeeded his father Ašot in 826, as prince of Armenia,⁹⁴ was not pleased with Catholicos Yovhannēs IV Ovayec'i (838-855). He tried to depose the Catholicos and set up in his place one of his liking. In protest against such blatant intervention in the affairs of the Church Yovhannēs IV temporarily retreated to the monastery of Ayric' Vank (Ayrivank'). Some of the *naxarars*, led by sparapet Smbat Bagratuni – Bagarat's brother – and prince Grigor Sup'an of Siwnik', convoked a council and re-instated the Catholicos on his throne.⁹⁵

In 232/847 Mutawakkil (232/847-247/861), an energetic man, ascended the Caliphal throne. He wanted to restore the authority of the central government over the rebellious *amīrs*. His attempt to reassert his authority over Armenia led the Armenians to open rebellion. To suppress the uprising he sent a Turkish general called Bugha the Elder (al-Kabīr) or Bugha al-Sharābī in A. D. 852. The latter went around spreading death and destruction all over Armenia for four years. He put most of the Armenian princes in fetters and sent them to Sāmarrā. The local life of the people and the feudal organization of the land was totally disrupted. The *naxarars* received a mortal blow.⁹⁶ The Church did not escape unscathed from this holocaust; he forced many to abjure their faith and those who refused he put to death.⁹⁷ Asoḻik records that he even turned a church into a mosque,⁹⁸ an incident which we do not come across during the Umayyad Caliphate. Caliph Mutawakkil reintroduced the discriminating laws against the Christians and the destruction of the newly built churches, which

⁹⁴ Arcruni, p. 119; Vardan, p. 79; Drasxanakerc'i, p. 115; Asoḻik, p. 107; Č'amč'ean, vol. II, p. 430. Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 1408; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 211; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 598. Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VII, p. 38.

⁹⁵ Drasxanakerc'i, pp. 115 sq.; Orbelean, pp. 122 sq.; Vardan, p. 80; Č'amč'ean, vol. II, p. 443. Cf. Arcruni, pp. 126 sqq.; Samuēl Anec'i, p. 92. See also Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 350 sq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 640 sq.

⁹⁶ On the campaigns of Bugha in Armenia see Drasxanakerc'i, pp. 118-130; Arcruni, pp. 142-225; Asoḻik, p. 107; Kaḷankatuac'i, p. 267; Vardan, pp. 80 sq.; Orbelean, pp. 124 sq.; Kirakos, p. 78; Samuēl Anec'i, pp. 93 sq. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 211 sq.; Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 1416; Ya^cqūbī, vol. II, p. 598. See also Laurent, *Arménie*, pp. 118-127, 346; Minorsky, *Sharvan*, pp. 24 sq.; Ghazarian, *Armenien*, pp. 52 sqq.; Grousset, *Histoire*, pp. 359-369; Vasmer, *Governors*, pp. 25 sq.

⁹⁷ Asoḻik, pp. 107 sq.; Drasxanakerc'i, pp. 118, 121-125, 128 sq.; Vardan, pp. 80 sq.; Arcruni, pp. 189 sqq.; Samuēl Anec'i, pp. 93 sq.; Ormanean, vol. I, cols. 645-648.

⁹⁸ Asoḻik, p. 107 sq.

Hārūn al-Rashīd had also done.⁹⁹ He forced the Armenian princes jailed in Sāmarrā to abjure their faith and many were martyred. But what saved Armenia from total destruction was again the disintegrating situation within the Caliphate and the successful campaigns of Emperor Basil I against the ʿAbbāsids in A. D. 867. In 887 Ašot Bagratuni received the crown of Armenia from Caliph Muṭamid (256/870-279/892), after which Church-State relations in Armenia entered a new phase under the Bagratid Kingdom.

E – Conclusion

There were fundamental differences between the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsīd administrative policies. The ʿAbbāsīds stopped the payment of annual stipends to the feudal cavalry. They disregarded the rights and privileges of the *naxarars* and interfered in the internal structure of the feudal organization of Armenia. They appointed a member of a different branch of a dynasty to be the head – such as Sahak Bagratuni – or forced on the *naxarars* a prince of Armenia that was not acceptable to all – such as Tačat Anjewac'i. Furthermore, the ʿAbbāsīds brought a large number of Arab tribesmen to settle in Armenia as colonizers, forming the centres of Arab power and control over the land, and used them to destroy the economic and military power of the *naxarars*.

Secondly, there were basic differences between the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsīd fiscal policies. The ʿAbbāsīds, from the very beginning, introduced poll tax and land tax. Moreover, land tax was not gathered according to the produce but according to the area under cultivation and in money rather than in kind. The ʿAbbāsīds sent Arab officials to each province to gather the taxes, unlike the Umayyads who had left it in the hands of the local elements and who took a lump sum from the prince of Armenia. They also introduced new techniques of tax-collection – such as, using torture and affixing a leaden seal upon the neck of those who paid.

Thirdly, there was a marked difference between the attitude of the Umayyad and ʿAbbāsīd Caliphates toward the Armenian Church. The ʿAbbāsīds interfered directly in the internal affairs of the Church, forbade the free movement of the clergy within the borders of Armīniya, even for ecclesiastical councils, subjected the clergy and church property to taxation, made the Catholicoi pay a certain sum upon ascending the throne, tried to expropriate church lands and treasures, and sometimes forced Christians to abjure their faith. The Umayyads had a very lenient policy toward the Armenian Church

⁹⁹ Yaḥqūbī, vol. II, p. 595; Ṭabarī, vol. III, p. 1419; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. VII, p. 47.

but the ^cAbbāsids, under the guise of religion, adopted a repressive religious policy.

Finally, there was a great similarity in the relations of the *naxarars* and the Church at the beginning of the Umayyad and ^cAbbāsīd Caliphates. During the confusion before the establishment of both the Umayyad and ^cAbbāsīd rule, the *naxarars* and minor nobles, benefitting from the upheavals, tried to appropriate some of the lands and income of the Church for their own benefit. Such actions were strongly condemned at the councils of Dvin (A. D. 645) and Partaw (A. D. 767/8).

CONCLUSION

The danger in writing on such a subject as “Church-State relations in Armenia during the Arab Domination” is that one is tempted to see events and developments as the consequence of the successful or unsuccessful implementation of a specific policy – in this case a religious policy. Undoubtedly the Arabs did bring with them a general pattern of government when they first emerged from the deserts of the Arabian peninsula in A. D. 632. They had their own intellectual, emotional and the newly acquired religious outlook, all of which conditioned the manner in which they responded to every new circumstance. But this does not necessarily imply that they embarked on the road to imperialism armed with a clear-cut “religious policy”. Church-State relations in Armenia during both Umayyad and ^cAbbāsīd Caliphates never remained constant but varied according to the situation the Caliphal administration confronted. I hope to have shown that each new circumstance presented new sets of factors which in turn led the government to redefine and modify its policy. To sum up, there are two possibilities: during the period under review, the Caliphate either had no firm religious policy for Armenia at all; or else the development of a religious policy was a gradual process whereby the policy could be identified with the process. My contention throughout has been that the latter is closer to the truth.

The social, political, economic and even religious organization of the Caliphate developed in the framework of the desert and remained subservient to Bedouin socio-religious and politico-economic structure – at least till the end of the Umayyad Caliphate. Though the Arabs did not bring with them a higher material or intellectual culture, nevertheless they regarded their religion as superior to those of the conquered peoples and they never felt the need to impose Islam on the rest. It appears as though for the Umayyads Islam was a special mark of distinction with an ethnic and political character rather than a universal faith which its founder had intended it to be. Thus the Umayyads were very reluctant to accept non-Arab Muslims as their equals in the partnership of faith – i.e., as confederate (*ḥalīf*) – but only as clients (*mawālī*), attached to Arab tribes, which of course was an inferior position. In other words, during the

Umayyad Caliphate the expansion of the Muslim Empire by Arab Muslim arms created a situation wherein no non-Arab could become a full Muslim. In conjunction with this and emanating from it, no non-Arab and non-Muslim could ever share political, economic, legal and religious rights and privileges equal to those of the pure Arab Muslim. Hence, the Armenian Christians were to be even more subservient to the “Super Arab Muslim Victorious Tribe” than the *mawālī*, with special duties and responsibilities binding upon them. We could sum up by saying that the Umayyad administration of Armenia was basically an extension of the socio-political conception of government prevalent in the Arabian desert before the birth of Islam and therefore, Islam was of peripheral importance in the running of the land. The Arab Muslims as an aristocratic warrior class were to play the role of the dominant tribe protecting the Armenians as the *ahl al-dhimma*.

Though politically this protection made the Armenians third-class citizens, after the pure Arab Muslims and the *mawālī*, yet it safeguarded for them a greater degree of internal autonomy and religious freedom than they had ever enjoyed under either Byzantine or Sassanian rule. The protection of the Armenians was guaranteed by the treaties between Mu^cāwiya and T’ēodoros Rštuni, in A. D. 652, and by those between Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah al-fihri with the inhabitants of the different cities. Throughout the Umayyad Caliphate the principles of these treaties formed the legal bases of the internal autonomy and religious freedom of Armenia. The fortunes of the Church were inseparably united with those of the State – the *naxarars* and the *Tiers-État* – as a whole. So long as the whole “Armenian Christian Tribe” remained subject to the Arabs and paid the tribute regularly they were left to their own devices. This provided the Armenians with ample opportunities for communal self-government. But if any section of the community failed to fulfil its duty, according to the laws of tribal solidarity and retaliation, the whole nation was held responsible for the crime of the part, and subjected to punishment. The underlying religious principle took a parallel form: so long as the Armenian Church remained politically on the right side of the fence she could carry on the practice of her cult, the clergy were free to officiate and the ecclesiastical establishments were unmolested. But as soon as the Church lost the stamp of political acceptability she was in serious trouble. Catholicos Nersēs III Šinoł had to spend five years in exile, in his native village, because he had formed a union with the Byzantine Church. Similarly Catholicos Sahak III Jorop’orec’i died in banishment for the same reason. Catholicos Nersēs Bakur of Albania suffered great humiliation and death, again because he had accepted the council of Chalcedon. This religious policy had two important consequences: firstly, it precipitated a complete

break with the Byzantine Church, uprooted all Chalcedonian teachings and practices in Armenia and brought about a union of the Armenian and Syrian Jacobite Churches. Secondly, it laid down the foundations of the *Ṭā'ifah* (community) system, that later during the Ottoman period became the basis of government – known as the Millet System – and is in practice even today in the Lebanon.

Since the Qur'ān is regarded as the final revelation of Allah, Muḥammad the last and seal of all the prophets, and Islām superior to all religions, another important aspect of the religious premise was that there was no room for proselytization, infidelity, or apostasy. No one was allowed to question the teachings of the Qur'ān or revile any of the practices of the Muslims. Apostasy was a crime worthy of capital punishment. The apostate was given the choice of reverting back to Islam or immediate death. Surhan, called Dawit' Dvnec'i, was executed because according to Islamic law he had apostatized, and refused to return to the fold of Islam. The same was true of Vahan Gołt'nac'i; though he was a Christian Armenian, yet, having been taken captive and brought up in Islamic tradition, it was not permissible for him to turn back to the faith of his childhood.

There was, however, an inherent inconsistency in the system of Arab administration of Armenia which could readily be transformed into an instrument of repression and could easily stifle all autonomy and religious freedom granted previously. Armenians were hard pressed between Byzantium and the Caliphate, and whether voluntarily or involuntarily changed sides every time the military and political balance shifted. For the Arab government – with the system of administration whose sole purpose was to maintain its control over the land and secure the regular collection of the tribute – this amounted to betrayal of the peace treaty and declaration of open rebellion. To avenge its honour and to re-establish its control over the region, the government sent punitive expeditions against Armenia which became more repressive with every new swing of the pendulum. These repressive measures included more stringent military and fiscal controls, attempts to exterminate the feudal nobility, the carrying of large sections of the populace into captivity, expropriation of property, and also the killing of the clergy, destruction of churches and monasteries, and plunder of ecclesiastical wealth.

Within the Caliphate itself there was a polarity between the *ummah*, the community of believers, and the State – run on the old Arabian tribal pattern. When Caliphs began to align themselves with the former – such as the Umayyad Caliphs ʿUmar II ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Yazīd II, or the ʿAbbāsīd Caliphs in general and particularly Hārūn al-Rashīd and al-Mutawakkil

(847-861) – humiliating restrictions were imposed on the *dhimmis*. They were forced to don discriminating clothes, were forbidden to sell or drink wine, and were subjected to legal discrimination. Furthermore, the government adopted an intolerant attitude towards other religions, ordered the destruction of icons and images, the demolition of churches built after the Arab conquest, and forbade religious processions, the ringing of bells and the free movement of the clergy. Fortunately political realities often forced the Caliphs to modify their plans.

The ^cAbbāsid revolution brought about the integration of the Arab and *mawla*, for religion became the basis of society. Thus Islam lost most of its old ethnic imprint and became supra-national. With the disappearance of the differences between the Arab and non-Arab Muslims, and the deeper Islamization of the institutions of government and society as a whole, the distinction between the Muslim and *dhimmi* became more emphasized. This generated a great deal of emotion against the Christians and paved the way for further repressive measures. In an administration where religion was the guiding principle of government non-Muslim communities could exist and practice their cult according to the degree of religious fanaticism of the rulers. Since the ^cAbbāsids were more zealous than their predecessors, therefore, their administrative and religious policies were much more oppressive in Armenia than those of the Umayyad Caliphs.

Finally, on the national level Church-*naxarar* relations were guided by the old feudal principles of self-interest and self-preservation. The Church as a feudal institution possessed large estates and had considerable income, all of which were very tempting for the feudal nobility. During periods of confusion – such as before the early Arab invasions till A. D. 645, and before the establishment of the ^cAbbāsid hegemony over Armenia in the middle of the eighth century – *naxarars* tried to appropriate some of the estates and income of the Church for their own benefit, and naturally the relations were very strained. In times of peace when law and order prevailed and there was a powerful prince of Armenia, Church-State relations were on a more positive footing, with the prince being the dominant partner. And during national crises when the danger of annihilation threatened both the Church and the nation, Church-State relations were very close; the princes of Armenia joined by the Catholicoi raised their voice of protest against the excesses and injustices of the Arab officials.

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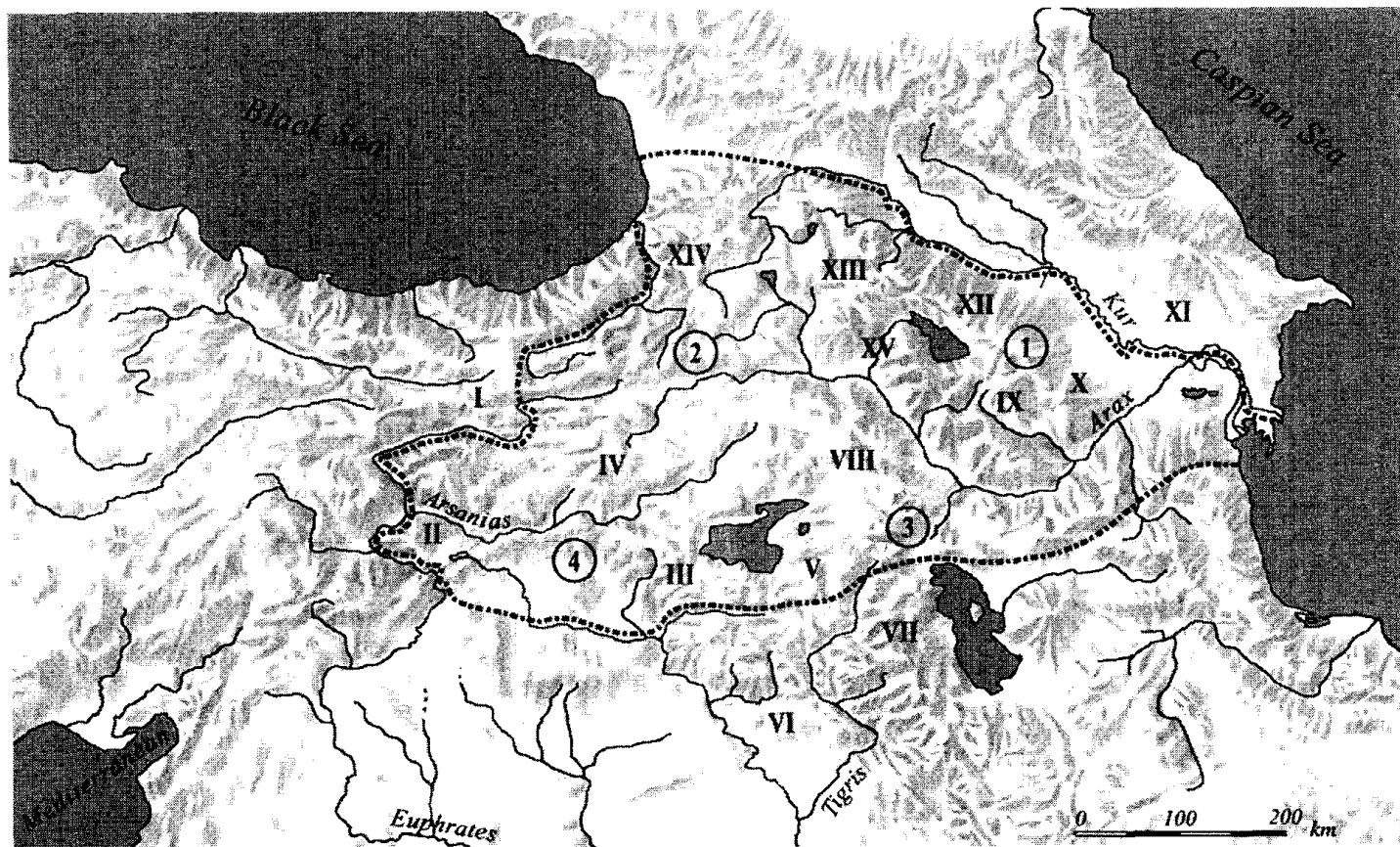
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The Fifteen Provinces of Historic Armenia

I. Barjr Hayk
II. 4th Armenia
III. Alcnik'

IV. Turuberan
V. Mekk'
VI. Korcek'

VII. Parskahayk'
VIII. Vaspurakan
IX. Siwnik'

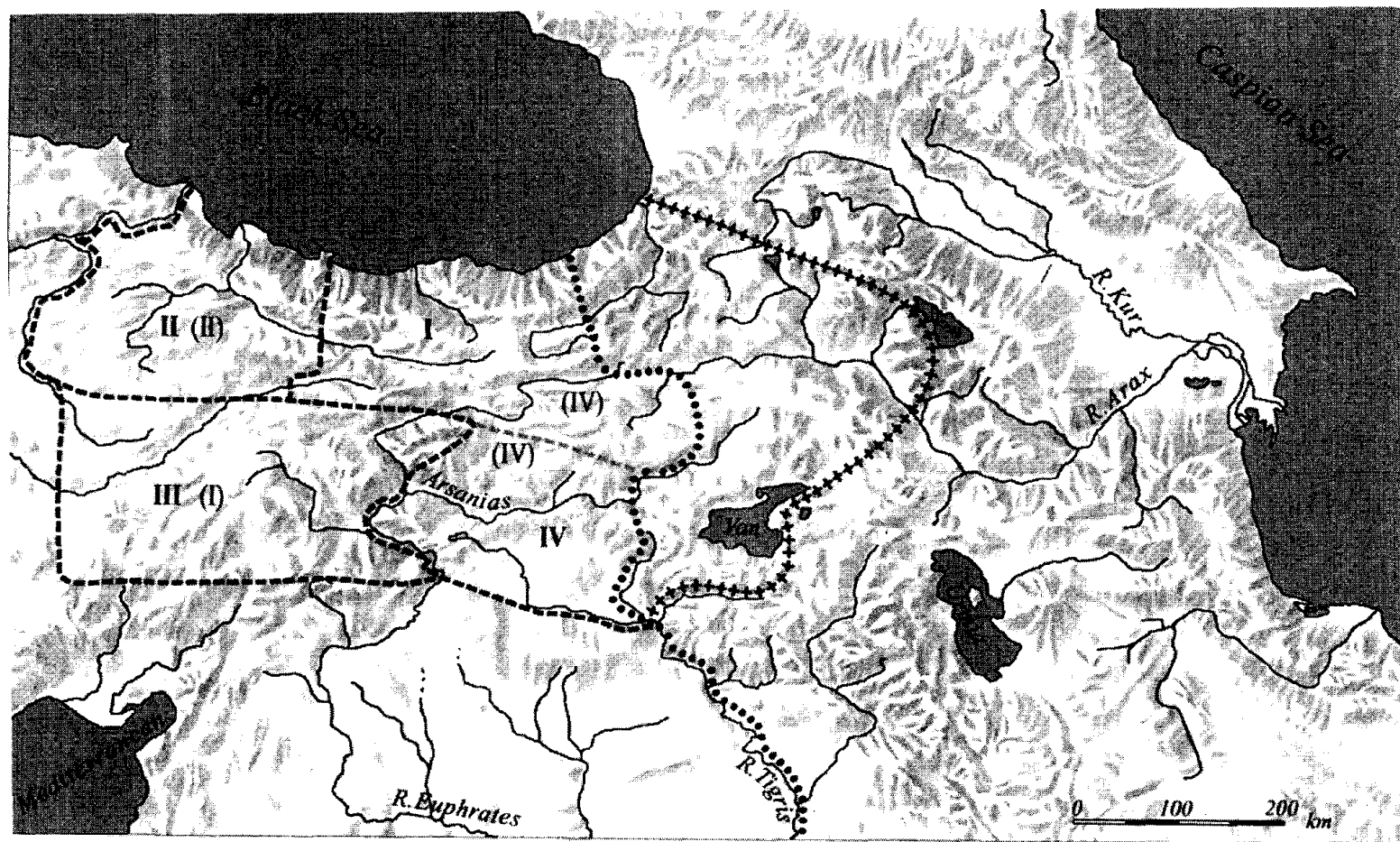
X. Arc'ax
XI. P'aytakaran
XII. Uti

XIII. Gugark'
XIV. Tayk'
XV. Ayrarat

① ② ③ ④

The Four Provinces of Armenia During the Arab Occupation

The Borders of Armenia During the Arab Occupation



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Persian-Byzantine Border of AD 528

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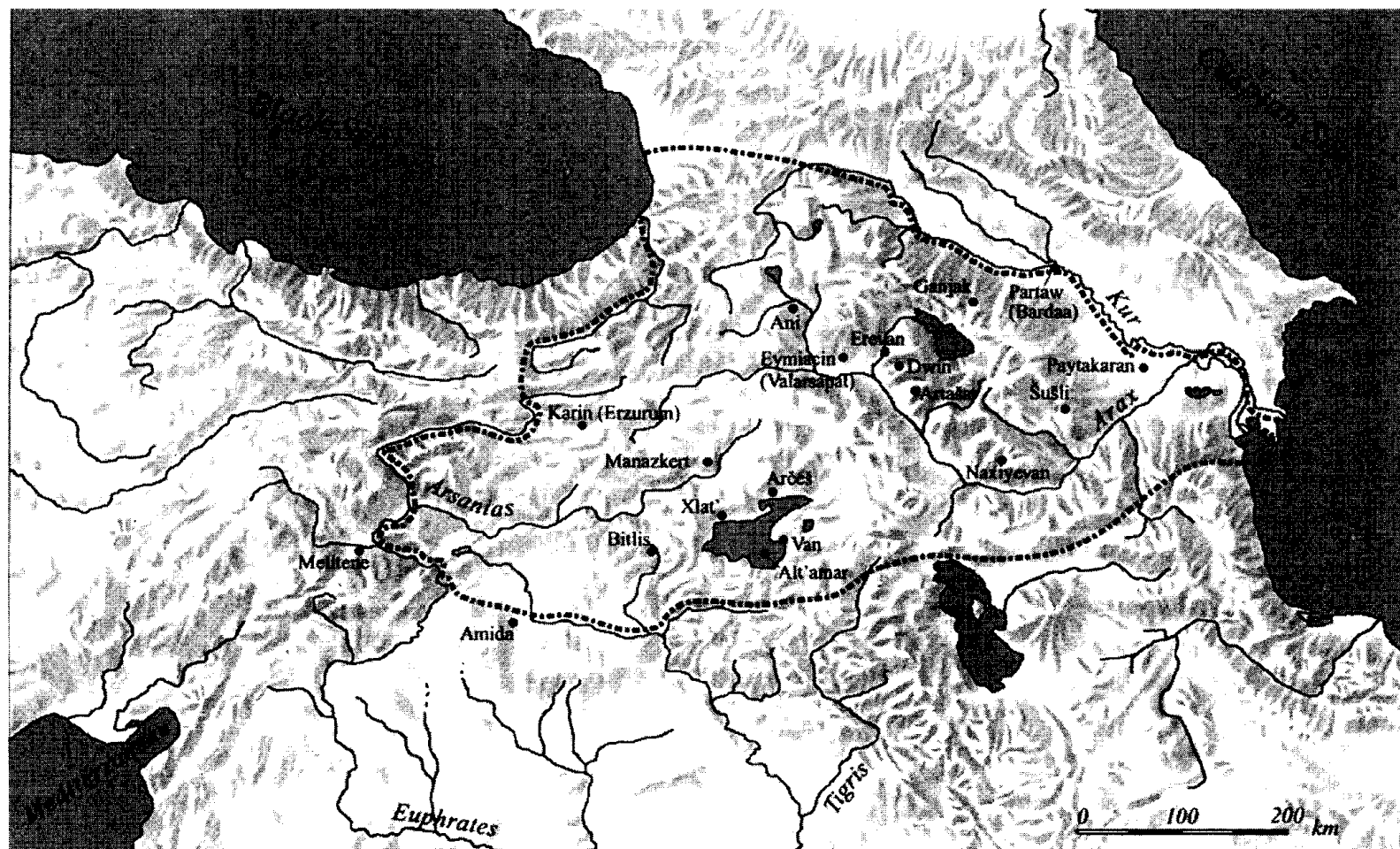
Persian-Byzantine Border of AD 591

I II III IV

The Four Provinces of Byzantine Armenia of AD 536

(I) (II) (IV)

The Three Provinces of Byzantine Armenia of AD 591



The Borders of Armenia During the Arab Occupation